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FOOD, PLACE-MAKING AND BELONGING AMONG FIRST GENERATION SOUTH-EAST ASIAN WOMEN IN THE UK

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the requirements of the Manchester
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Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care
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Abstract

The thesis is an ethnographic study which explores the connection between food, place-making and belonging of first generation South-East Asian women in the UK. The objectives of the study are to document place-making through the retaining, adoption and transformation of daily food practices, and to develop appropriate methodology for the empirical analysis of these topics. The study is divided in two phases. In the first I employed 9 interviews and a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), along with participant observation and fieldnotes. In the second through a participatory-led approach I have extended the traditional ethnography in creative and sensorial methodologies. I conducted two participative ethnographies in (semi)public spaces. One is a sitting ethnography in a common room of a university in Manchester, where 4 women and I celebrate traditional festivals, whilst another is a walking ethnography at Kirkgate market in Leeds. The findings of the thematic analysis highlighted the disruptions that the women faced when coming to the UK and the impact on their wellbeing. Participatory ethnographies captured how the women created spaces of comfort in the UK. The creolization of meals, traditions, and diets was strategic to women to survive and create new meanings of home abroad. The thesis makes an interdisciplinary contribution to knowledge in the areas of place and food studies, health and community psychology, and migration. Furthermore, it makes a novel contribution with the development of the 'tablographies', a method consisting in the observation of food tables settling, which describe how the women embody place and stretch out the boundaries of the home beyond national and ethnic spatial configurations. Tablographies show great potentials for their applicability in the areas of urban planning, community and health psychology.

Keywords: Place-making, belonging, food practices, gender migration, sensorial and creative methods

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Thesis Introduction

Cities have undergone rapid urbanization and have increasingly transformed into global and multicultural societies (Hall, 1992; Massey, 1994). Indeed, from cultural units, cities have become hybrid amalgams of ethnicities, cultures, commodities and foodstuff from everywhere in the world (Hall, 1992; Bauman, 2000; Canclini, 2001; Howes, 2006). In this context, humanistic studies of 'place' are especially important in the panorama of migration due to the enhanced and diversified forms of life-mobility (Appadurai, 1996), and the plethora of ways humans engage in place-attachment and develop a meaning of 'home' and belonging (Massey, 1994; Ahmed, 1999). Migrants arriving in these cities may feel immediately disoriented by encounters with the local (sub) cultures (Massey, 1994; Mintz and Du Bois, 2002). For migrants, food becomes a crucial aspect in migratory status. Retaining their own food facilitates the individual's transition and adjustment to the new environment (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002), repairs broken experiences of home and identity (Brown and Mussell, 1984; Law, 2001) and creates social connections (Cook and Crang, 1996; Turgeon and Pastinelli, 2002).

1.1.1 Overall aim of the study

This proposed research investigates the intricate link between migration, food, place and belonging. In particular, it seeks to explore how migration journeys of first generation South-East Asian women living in the UK shed light on ways in which they experience place and belonging through their daily food practices.

The women participating in this study began to arrive to the UK since 1980s, while the latest migration was about one year ago (2014). Some of these women are the autonomous migrants from the emerging middle-class of South-East Asian families (Campt and Thomas, 2008; Hoang, 2009) who arrived in the UK, either to study and/or enhance their professional skills and careers. Meanwhile, some of them rebuilt new families in their settlement country (i.e. the UK) and in various ways have settled down. A second group, working and/or educated middle-class South-East Asian women, made

their decision of migrating due to the employment market, to guarantee a better education to their children and to reunite their families (Pang, 1998; Huang and Yeoh, 2005).

Whereas the choice of moving is made arbitrarily, the possibility to cross borders for South-East Asian women clearly indicates a position of social privilege (Ahmed, 1999). Moving abroad in this case generally reflects the desire of women to prove themselves in new cultural contexts and find locations which best suit their needs of 'home' (Nyman, 2017). Moreover, there is also the emancipated desire of the women to be independent decision-makers over their life and career, although for the migrant women who moved for their family this is not always the case. Voluntary migration is about tracing a new biography (Nyman, 2017), affirming beliefs and aspirations, and transcending (ethnic) self-definitions that restrain the complexity of their person (Chambers, 1994). However, whilst the South-East Asian women are those who when coming abroad experience the ability to see the world beyond their nation (Ahmed, 1999), migration is always a complex experience which may put them in disadvantaged positions.

As women use food practices and cuisine to cruise and create spaces of autonomy in the city, there is a need for a method which engages the women in their everyday life and better grasps their experiences. Food has entered in the agenda of many ethnographers as a subject of studies (Brown and Mussell, 1984). However, there are few works which use food as a method for the investigation of place-making. This study follows this direction. Creative and sensory methodologies capture the bodily and sensual experiences of place and belonging ingrained in women's lives, where shopping, cooking and eating have a crucial meaning. The study of place aims at capturing the continuing process of de-localization and re-localization to which the migrant women are subjected in order to construct their meaning of being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1927). Localizations are therefore places of memory, sensual human positions, which are ingested, regurgitated, and reconstructed in new spatial configurations, as renewed and dynamic aspects of existence.

1.1.2 Rationale

As cities grow in size, the movement of women is generally into urban settings (Longhurst et al., 2010; Nyman, 2017). The politics of public spaces impact on migration uneasiness. Women are often forced to navigate public spaces differently due to a lack of implementation of social policies which enhances women's participation in urban life (Yuval-Davis, 1997; Longhurst, et al. 2010). Being able to move in the urban space is crucial for women's wellbeing and to exert agency and freedom. Mobility, indeed forms and reforms social life (Cresswell and Uteng, 2008). This research, looks at the specific of food practices in migration, as they are fundamental for the women to relocate and bond to these places.

South-East Asian women may enact their agency, when they use ordinary food practices to create a home for them and their families, voice their experiences and construct their belonging (Law, 2001; Counihan, 2006). The women, who move across states in search of new locations give meaning to their existence (Nyman, 2017), perform practices abroad to seek either a sense of continuity and innovation with the original home (Marte, 2012). Sense of place, has been debated, as the nostalgic response with which, individuals build in the places they inhabit (Cross, 2001). However, sense of place is not the uncritical representation of the original customs, but cultures are reconstructed abroad through assemblages (Duff, 2009). There, embodied practices, material things, sensuous memoirs, and imagination, from places where individuals have lived and those where they move forward, are used (McCraig, 1996).

The emphasis on food as a social practice, in this context of migration, is due to its ability to generate well-being and sense of belonging (Fisher et al., 2017). Food creates a transitional space between the original and the host country (Winnicott, 1971) through the practices that the women perform. This spatial experience, sees individuals negotiating and building their attachment to different places, and relieving possible contradictions. Food in this research is seen as a 'boundary object' (Burman, 2004), or an object that inhabits boundaries, since it is simultaneously real and imaginary, material, sensorial and symbolic (Burman, 2004). A boundary object, in group-analysis and psychoanalysis, is a catalytic object, which is brought into existence by the group, in order

to be charged with meanings that individuals project, whilst negotiating their dwelling (imaginative) spaces. Food provides a context and roots to individuals who negotiate aspects of their cultures and belonging in change and transition across borders.

Women face difficulties when relocating abroad. They have to become accustomed to new places and the diverse cultures. These could be a reason for isolating and disrupted experiences. Moreover, migrant women are more at risk of loneliness and health, due to the separation from friendships and other ordinary networks and having to rebuild those abroad (Curtin and Heldke, 1992; Yuval-Davis, 1997). The contemporary multiplication of the network of cultural exchange, information, and the transit of goods between countries has ameliorated the life of women. They can find most products in the shelf of supermarkets or eat some of them in local restaurants. Still, most of the efforts of women are directed in keeping alive their original cultures through food (Law, 2001; Marte, 2012; Dyck, 2016). Furthermore, places where migrants display publicly their cultures in the city are becoming less, and more privatized, with the consequence of the compression of chances for intercultural socialization and exchange (Law, 2001; Low, K.E. Y., 2013), and the multisensorial dwelling experiences are drastically reduced (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Migrants' cultural events become rare occasions, and popular cuisine is only performed in their 'home' (Appadurai, 1996; Ang, 2016).

Despite the many aforementioned difficulties, women are still resourceful as they shape the cities they inhabit through the hidden work of their food practices (Fisher, 1943, 1954; Curtin, 1992; Kavar, 2004). The South-East Asian women of this study do not always master very high cooking skills, nor see cooking as a female characterization. However, their life is embedded in food and cooking as a way to exist in place, make their voice heard in these societies, as well as in claiming spaces of mobility and creativity (Lefebvre, 1984; Soja, 1996; Latham, 1999). It is in these spaces that between transformations and assemblages the women construct 'home'.

This research looks at the domestic practices of food and cuisine in relation to place-making. The 'home' is a place of blurred contours for social policies and considered as too mundane by some academics. Yet, its separation from public spaces is still actual and it can be a cause of migrant's women isolation. Popular cuisine and food practices show

creativity and dynamism of the migrant women in using food to reconstitute their places and belonging (Gunew, 2010). The domestic area of food refers not only to the kitchenspace, but I rather seek how home is interconnected with other city spaces and how the women domesticate these spaces. Furthermore, the representation of space as discontinuous through maps has affected the way individuals conceive space as bounded experiences, and cultures as objectified and discrete outcomes of these delimitations (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). This is problematic as it focuses on differences, other than the convergences of cultures in multicultural societies, which obviously creates the separation of groups and lifestyles. Women's cooking and food practices shed light on elements of uncertainty, instability and fragility of these global city systems in both situating, including and reconstituting public spaces for diversity (Longhurst et al., 2009).

1.1.3 The aim and the objectives

The aim of the research is to:

- I) Explore the connection between migration, place-making and belonging of South-East Asian women living in the UK through the retaining, adoption and transformation of daily food practices in urban settings.

The research objectives are to:

- I) Document place-making of ordinary food practices of South-East Asian women in public and private settings with the use of appropriate methodologies;
- II) Develop and apply appropriate methodologies for the empirical exploration and analysis of these topics of place, gender migration, and food.

1.2 Thesis structure

Given the complexity of the research topic, the appropriate literature is located in diverse disciplines. To frame the research question, the review is organized into four areas of scholarship: migration, place, foodways and the senses. The structure of the thesis is as follows.

Chapter 2 addresses literature on migration studies, unpacks the complexity of diasporas and transnational approaches to migration for the definition of migrant groups and their settlement in the host country. It also considers the gender migration and feminist ethnographic perspectives as a framework of this research.

Chapter 3 explores the phenomenological nature of place. This chapter, first defines sense of place, second it presents dwelling as place-making. Then, it explores the city as home and presents the literature of scholars who have based their analysis of place in the city. Place results as spatial practices, acts of rebellion. The local and global interconnections of space, and the playful and artistic dimensions of city spaces are also presented. The chapter concludes with non-representational theory as the future of the literature of place.

Chapter 4 introduces the definition of 'foodways' and its current disciplinary status in Europe and overseas. Then, it outlines some major ethnographic works about food and place-making as regard to the home, and closes with the status of the literature of food in the South-East Asian diasporas.

Chapter 5 delves into senses studies. It engages with the traditional anthropological and sociological literature of the senses to propose valid alternatives for the study of place, belonging and food. It also presents methodological issues regarding the textualization of anthropological studies and its compliance with sensory methodological practice.

Chapter 6 describes the methodology and the methods of this research. First, it introduces the epistemology of the thesis and the ethnographic methods employed. Specifically, emplaced semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006), participant observation, and fieldnotes used in the first phase of the study. Second, it follows the design of the study, a timetable, and the participant's profile. Third, it also describes the limitations of these methods and introduces the creative and sensual methods utilized in the second phase of this study, precisely video and photo ethnography, mobile interviews, and phenomenological mapping. It explains how these methods have been employed in particular urban settings throughout the fieldwork. Fourth, it presents the contribution of this thesis to the creative and sensorial methods by introducing the 'tablographies' or photos of food table settings. This is a method inspired by phenomenological mapping for the study of place. Last, this Chapter 6, also, presents the ethics. The following three chapters cover the analysis.

Chapter 7 illustrates four themes from thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006), such as host country, creolization, and home country, followed by their interpretations.

Chapter 8 is *The banquet*, an ethnography of a gathering festive event. This chapter presents the new method, the “tablographies”, which illustrates spatial practices of food and the domestication of urban spaces through women’s food exchange. It, also, recounts how women make Manchester their home through eating, cooking, sharing recipes, celebrating and the sensual memories of their former homes.

Chapter 9, *The market*, is a video tour which describes the embodied and sensorial experience of shopping with a Chinese student as place-making.

Chapter 10, the discussion, weaves together the findings from thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and the ethnographic work. It, also, discusses the limitations of the findings in traditional methods.

Chapter 11 draws the conclusion of this thesis. It discusses the knowledge and methodological contributions of the thesis, reflects personally and methodologically on the Ph.D. journey, and suggests post doctoral work for the development of the thesis.

Chapter 2
Migration studies
Theoretical lens: understanding women's migration

2.1 Introduction to chapter

The following review presents the literature on migration, with focus on diasporas and transnationalism as critical scholarships. The global south scholars have pointed out their limitations by revealing their anachronistic character and defining them as essentialist approaches to migration (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 2013; Cho, 2007). Furthermore, diasporas and transnationalism in the literature seem to belong to two different schools of thought, which describe two phenomena that are historically distant and featuring remarkable differences (Bruneau, 2010). However, the use of the two concepts for the characterization of migrant groups in the literature is not straightforward. The following review aims to unpack the complexity of defining diasporas and transnationalism and highlight their limitations, particularly, why this thesis does not refer to the South-East Asian migration as diasporas and/or transnationalism. Besides, it discusses the ideas of 'home' and space from the two scholarships. It then considers areas that require more empirical work, especially in relation to the South-East Asian migration. As there is not a uniform consensus with regard to the ideas of diasporas and transnationalism, the second part of the chapter draws on ethnographic studies on migration to shed light on these controversial aspects (Schiller et al., 1995). Additionally, this literature discusses gendered migration and feminist ethnography of migration to unpack the complexity of female contemporary flows, in opposition to the traditional migration theory. It argues that the feminist approaches offer meaningful and subjective spaces of analysis to understand migration. In doing so, this review includes works from the literature of belonging, migration studies, Asian and Pacific studies, cultural studies, sociology, and diasporic studies.

2.2 Defining diaspora

The term Diaspora was initially used to describe the Jewish experience of de-territorialization and other similar social forms of dispersion and consequent

resettlement in different territories. Simplified definitions of diasporas include the following core aspects: 1) movement and dispersion of groups out of their country; 2) ethnocommunal identity and boundary maintenance through a wide net of solidarity; 3) the belief of common origins on the basis of territorial and geographical ties, which go beyond their dispersion at a global level; 4) orientation towards the homeland and a 'dream for return'; and 5) a political sentiment shared by diasporic people (Cohen, 2008). Cohen and Vertovec (1999) argued that the experiences of exiled populations are traumatic and involve losses and sentiments of displacement. Currently, 'new' diasporas (Spivack, 1996) have been created due to instable political conditions, changes in political governance (Baser, 2015) and stringent immigration policies for those immigrants settled overseas. For instance, with the declaration of communism in Cuba by Fidel Castro (1959), the number of immigrants who were leaving the island to places like Latin America, Europe, and more recently United States and Africa increased. Consequently, the state of Cuba has enforced regulations on their immigration policy, which has prevented Cuban nationals abroad to enter and exit the nation. Many immigrants saw their permissions being denied and Cuban communities abroad had a harsh and contested relationship with Cuba since then (Cuban Research Institute, 2011).

The process of diversification of Western societies has coincided with the rise in interest of scholars in the study of diasporas. However, the term has been used indiscriminately and it seems to have lost its real meaning (Bauböck and Faist, 2010; Cohen, 2015). Diasporas often appear to be a static idea in the way they are presented in the literature. They are theorised exclusively as a loss of home and maintenance of links to the home country, and on the premise that diasporic individuals belong to the same group on the basis of racial and national identifications. Additionally, they are thought of as a recent phenomenon that has started with migration, rather than being seen created as a result of local internal conflicts due to the discrimination and intolerance of cultural diversity. Bhabha (1994) contests that there are diasporas within the state, without it being a necessity for a group to move. The Kurdish minority are an example of 'stateless diaspora'. Their land has been contested by and divided across borders among Iran, Turkey, Iraq, and Syria. Their persecution by the Turkish has led to their dispersion to other countries (Eliassi, 2015). Another example are the Russian communities who moved

to the borders of ex-Soviet Union and live in a liminal territory and have been denied their rights, as they are not considered Russian (Cohen and Vertovec, 1999). Furthermore, diasporas are incorrectly thought to maintain their structure along with time and live in complete isolation and marginalization.

These representations attract major critics from cultural and global studies. Spivack (2013) argues that the idea of Diaporas is still attached to the history of the nation-state, since it is based on the impossibility of travelling, and therefore it appears to be old-fashioned in the time of global mobility. Additionally, the idea supported by diasporists that exiled communities identify themselves for their ethnic and national bounds is also questionable. The examples above showed that there are groups who inhabit 'liminal spaces' (Bhabha, 1994) within their national country. They have their own collective memory and history, costumes and language that have originated from hybrids or their multiple forms of belonging. Cho (2007) criticizes the objectivizing of diasporas, their split into different movements, and the listing codes, which depersonalise these by clustering people in a specific group. She aims at subjectivizing diasporas. Diasporas, she argues, are not only the scattered communities bound by a shared history, ethnicity, or a religion, but also by their relation to power. This entails looking at the history of colonialism and how it has engendered displacement amongst many communities that connect through this history.

Sökefeld (2002) studied how diasporas organise and sustain their existence. Rather than looking at them as political formations, he conceptualises diasporas as imagined communities at a transnational level, which reunite ethnic groups who live in different locations. These communities are sustained on the basis of a collective consciousness. People belonging to these communities need to adhere to a shared self-definition of a transnational community and act as persuaders who invite other people to participate and sustain the community. This activity is performed through social events such as fundraising and other neighbourhood associations. However, migrants do not always identify with the same ethnic community and consequently, do not readily join those communities. For this reason, diasporas can describe migrants only generically. The examples showed above describe them as cultural self-representations. Diasporas are,

indeed, a multi-faceted worldwide phenomena, which entail transformation (Sigona, et al., 2015). Furthermore, the distinction between diasporic and transnational groups becomes blurred due to overlapping ideas between the two phenomena. Globalisation and technological progression have eased the participation, contributions and interconnections of diasporic groups to the events taking place in their former countries. For instance, social networks, migration and international organizations have an impact on diasporas (Sigona, et al., 2015). For these reasons, scholars like Bauböck (2008) consider diasporas as transnational political formations, whilst Vertovec (2004) uses the expression 'transnational diasporas'. This includes every group that has remained dispossessed of their land, resettled and/or reborn in a land different from the one of origin, but which still maintains political, economic and cultural networks with it. At the same time, these groups are connected at a global level with all the other countries, rather than being isolated. Additionally, Vertovec (2004), argues that the solid economic activities (e.g. food trade, other types of businesses) that these groups have started is another defining feature of diasporas. Beyond being a political and heterogeneous economic phenomenon, diasporas are social, cultural, historic, and material.

Due to the complexity of the phenomenon, the term diasporas has to be handled carefully. Ambiguities surround diasporas, which may fail to explain how the communities abroad are described and approached, by putting them in different categories. For instance, the Asian diasporas account for a long history of earlier and later departures, due to cultural, economic and political reasons of diverse groups from different regions of mainland China and Hong Kong. This is why identifying these groups as a unique diaspora is also problematic (Benton and Liu, 2004). Similarly, the Vietnamese diasporas have been diversified throughout history, especially in relation to the places where the Vietnamese settled (The state of the world's refugees, 2000). Scholars propose different approaches to these phenomena. Sökefeld (2002) argues that one possibility to approach diasporas is to study the process of their formation, rather than looking at a specific ethnic group with some peculiar characteristics. Sigona et al. (2015) propose a study of diasporas that considers spaces, practices and networks that help with seeing them in novel ways. Bhabha (1994) calls for the study of the psychic dimension of diasporas rather than its socio-historical examination. Shiller et al. (1995) propose an ethnographic approach to

migration. Once it is clarified that studying mobile groups through the lens of diasporas and/or transnationalism has its limits, the next step could be exploring the diversity of forms of belonging that these groups generate through observing their material practices. Food is one of these practices that is deemed useful for this purpose, and the thesis moves forward in this direction. This thesis aims to embrace these ideas and provides an ethnographic approach to the food practices of South-East Asian women and how they generate meanings of belonging beyond the geographical, national and ethnic home, and how food categories of inclusion and exclusion are continually re-worked by the community.

2.3 Defining transnational

Transnationalism is a relatively recent form of migration. This term was adopted after the big depression of WWII in the late 1980s, with the emergence of globalization, the abandonment of the ideas of the nation-state¹ and the development of cities (Schiller, et al., 1995; Pieke, 2004). In the transnational idea the modern Western cities are identified as economic units due to the convergence of migrant flows and their activities especially in urban spaces. The term refers to the economics, trade, and systems of exchanges at a global level. Transnational migration is a temporary or long-term multidirectional phenomenon between countries, depending on a “voluntary” choice and on the receiving and sending countries’ requests of specific types of labour (Schiller et al., 1995).

A crucial point in diasporas and transnational flows is the progressive weakening of identity and territorial ties with the country in which the migrants resided, due to the crossing of borders, opening of frontiers and the circulation of goods. The prefix trans- appears in relation to the emergence of transnational organizations, which suggests that there is presence of different types of international relations across borders, unlike the previous ones, which were negotiated by the state. Transnationalism describes migrants’ long-lasting economic, material and virtual ties across countries. This is related to the idea of circular migration, as it entails a virtual return to the former country, through the

¹A form of sovereignty that originated in Europe between the 15th and 19th century, where cultural and ethnic definitions were used to create an idea of the Nation as an entity in opposition to the others and a national identity, and to justify the geo-political forms of control operated by the state.

transferability of 'things' (i.e. food stuff) and information. Transnationalism encompasses physical movement to include how goods and ideas travel and it is not related to the demographic boundaries of the diaporas (Spivak, 2013). Instead, transnationalism includes interaction with the locals and/or with other ethnic groups, aspects of isolation, and contacts with home and virtual groups (Faist, 2010). Cyberspace also allows transnational diasporas to be held virtually, dismantling the idea of the group as a circumscribed and identifiable unit (Cohen 2008). Belonging is, thus, (re)defined as a continuous challenge beyond borders (Schiller, et al., 1995). Furthermore, whilst the diasporic adjective has been adapted to the Chinese migrants, transnational diasporas is often the preferred term. The global communities shape these circuits through foodstuffs and remittances (Benton and Liu, 2004). Benton and Liu (2004) are particularly critical of the use of the word diasporas in relation to the Chinese who are overseas. The migration of the Chinese around the globe is a composite and highly diversified phenomenon, in need of clarification and specification through more empirical research (Ma and Cartier, 2003; Pieke, 2004; Nyír and Breidenbach, 2005). Ma and Cartier (2003), also suggest that diaspora, as discussed previously, is not appropriate when applied to the Chinese, who have not been expelled from their own homeland. Especially for the Chinese diaspora, the literature distinguishes between the Chinese migrants from the mainland and those who are from the former Chinese and European colonies, like Vietnam and Hong Kong (Lam et al., 2009; Knowles, 2012). However, Chinese, Jews, Indians and Arabs arrived to Western countries to trade, and as Ma and Carter (2003) suggested, have established an enduring system of remittances with their homeland. Schiller et al., propose that the word 'transmigrant could be used as an alternative to diasporas:

Immigrants having multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state (1995: 48).

Transnationalism, according to Nyír and Breidenbach (2005), is more than a definition. It is a method to tackle migration that takes into account local differences by distinguishing between the flows according to countries and provinces of departure and the diversity of

the resettled groups like the Chinese overseas. Similarly, Schiller et al. (1995), propose a transnational anthropology of migration.

However, scholars like Spivack (2013) are very skeptical when applying the transnational lens to study migration. She argues that the transnational fails to track the simultaneity of relationships that these migrant communities have in the age of globalisation as they are not exclusively connected across nations. In this thesis, diasporas and transnationalism have been referred to, in order to discuss the limits of their definitions in relation to home and belonging, due to the fact that resettling experiences of migrants contain both the aspects with regards to the home. In other words, the participant women in this thesis do not necessarily belong to diasporic communities, although their sense of belonging and home incorporates features of diasporas. Moreover, the thesis observes not only how the women shape economic circuits of connection with the settling and original country through their food practices, but also the other type of connections that the women generate beyond the transnational activity. Definitions of diasporic or transnational processes imply some ideas of home and space. The following section explores these concepts within the literature of diaspora and transnationalism.

2.4 Concepts of “home” within the literature of diaspora

Diasporas and transnationalism studies seek to understand the movement and the spatial dynamics of contemporary migration. As discussed in the sections above, diasporists and transnationalists theorised these phenomena as geo-political and/or economic formations. Consequently, diasporas and transnational definitions of migration flows set the idea of space that these groups inhabit: how politically, geographically and historically, these groups are organized in space. Recently, transnationalism opened to a new idea of space. Since diasporas are not conceived anymore as fixed and it is possible to configure the multi-connections that they entertain, it makes the study of place and belonging more complex. However, the idea of space that diasporist and transnationalists propose is still not convincing, as they still tend to explain the mobility of people as groups. As one of the core characteristics that diasporas and transnational migration shape is the idea of space and “home”, this section starts with the definitions from these two schools of thought. In particular, it critically presents the idea of a unique home and

that of the homeland developed by diasporists and transnationalists. These ideas summarise how the literature of diaspora has contributed to the study of the home and belonging, which is crucial for this thesis.

Diasporic groups were represented as having common origins and a unique home. In spatial terms, diasporas offer a split idea of home and belonging. Diasporist scholars argue that migrant groups grow and experience nostalgia for their homeland (i.e. usually thought as the nation) (Cohen and Vertovec, 1999), and their sense of multi-locality is split into the feeling of being 'here' and 'there' (Gilroy, 1993; Bhabha, 1996). Their efforts seem to be directed in a real and/or imaginary re-production of the homeland abroad. Cohen (2008), discusses some aspects that make diasporas different from other forms of migration, in relation to the homeland. Diasporic groups are tied by a collective, territorial, historical memory, vision and myth with respect to their homeland. They feel unaccepted by the host society and tend to live separately. They commit to the purpose of maintaining their own roots and reinstate their homeland abroad, and maintain substantive solidarity between members. Whilst transnational scholarships argue that the homeland is a symbolic and imaginary place-attachment, diasporist scholars debate that the concept of homeland is crucial to diasporas (Cohen, 2008). This is where the distinction between diasporas and transnationalism still appears fundamental to them. Tölölyan (1996), editor of *Diaspora* journal, argues that diasporist scholars who sustain that globalization has battered the attachment between groups and place with the creation of global spaces, are ignoring the fact that sense of place (i.e as localization or attachment to the land) is vital for diasporic groups. Similarly, Brubaker (2000) considers that boundary maintenance and homeland orientation are features that distinguish the specific diasporas. Conversely, transnational and globalisation scholars argue that the circulation of people worldwide has led to new ways to think about the home (Ahmed, 2003). The transnational and globalisation standpoints shed light on the multiple and enduring ties that migrants have with the settler country, the home country, and the global span at large (Schiller et al., 1995). More specifically, these bounds elide the territorial bound with the land to install a link in terms of labour and decentre the home as multiple ties. Transnationalism entails 'home' as not territorial but the production of multiple economic ties that people have with place/s. In reality, the literature of

belonging and cultural studies shed light on the emotional, psychological, relational, and material ties that migrants build across countries (Ahmed, 1999). The scholars of globalisation conceive the idea of 'home' as being more de-territorialized and fluid concept, as individuals can have multiple homes, loyalties and emotional attachments, which they construct along their journey (Massey, 1994; Brah; 1996; Ahmed, 1999). Vertovec (1999) suggests that the idea of 'home' is mostly symbolic in diasporas. He defines diasporas as a type of consciousness and cultural production. The former is a sort of dual consciousness due to decentred attachments and being simultaneously in more than one place (i.e. having two homes or identities, for example being Chinese and something else). The second approach describes individuals and/or groups involved in the production and reproduction of transnational, social and cultural phenomena through exchanges and activities, providing for themselves a more "active" identity rather than purely their ethnic identity. This thesis delves in the ethnographic study of everyday life (Schraube and Højholt, 2015) in order to dismantle bounded ideas of space and home, and instead looks at more creative and diverse ways in which the home is imagined and crafted by migrants.

Transnational scholars also argue that whilst the 'homeland' is an imagined production in diasporas, the 'home' is, the space where people come to and settle, is a place that can be imagined and it is supported by fantasy and extraordinary notions that are not historically validated. Individuals in diasporas reconstruct "home" with their memory, and imagine and feel with their heart as if home is "there" (Brah, 1996). Blunt and Bonnerje (2013) propose the idea of 'diaspora cities' or the city as home. They explored the experiences of Anglo-Indian in London and Chinese Calcuttains in Toronto and stated that home encompasses the private domestic setting, which includes the city and its structural forms. This idea implies that in the city, diasporic people develop feelings of attachment, belonging and home, rather than forming an attachment to the nation as a homeland. Cho (2007) claims that migration is not related to the land, but to the physical and psychological dimension of the memory of dispossession by colonists, which Bhabha (1994) calls the 'memory of becoming unhomely'. This is relevant for this thesis, as belonging and home trigger from a memory loss.

The study of transnational diasporas has received harsh criticism by postmodern scholars, who argue that their nominalist logic applies to migration. In the perspective of home and belonging, diasporists and transnational scholars work on a top-down logic, where it is the type of migration that defines their belonging, diasporas are creative spatial organizations. The ideas of home, space and belonging that they entail is more original than their sole geo-political and/or economic features.

As the thesis looks at the migration routes of a small group of women from South-East Asia, in this respect, more research is needed in the direction of domestic and urban place-making to evaluate how diasporas produce and think about home in original ways, or how the home is entangled in systems of transnational production and consumption. These systems open up to further dimensions of space which encompass the geographical, political and economic structures of our world map. As an alternative to the traditional migration theory, which maintains that the direction of migration flows as diasporic or transnational processes and is generally gender neutral, the following section discusses gendered migration studies. Gender migration is used as the frame-work to tackle the migratory journeys of the women illustrated in the thesis, and considers how gender influences migration.

2.5 Gender migration

Gender migration is a sensitive approach to migration. The term sensitive refers to the feminist outlook that gender migration scholars maintain, since they attempt to address, with sensitivity, the condition of women and migration by paying attention to their vulnerability in migration. The approach maintains a fair view on how migration is influenced by different gender-related factors, and tackles the feminisation of migration (Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Mahler and Pessar, 2006). Within globalisation, the study of gendered migration has become more prominent to better understand how females and migration intersect. This thesis benefits from this approach since it looks at the relocation of South-East Asian women abroad, and in particular, across diverse (and multicultural) types of women's migration.

Traditional migration theory has explained international migration in a gender-neutral

perspective. Theories that have considered gendered responsibilities and power relationships within married couples have described women as a passive force in migration, who often have to follow their husband's decision. This has impacted enormously on the way women were portrayed in the literature (i.e. as passive participants). In migration theory it appears as if men are more mobile than women, have a range of different employments, and are more employable in those destinations; whilst women migrated as part of the household rather than independently (Boyd 1989, Chant and Radcliffe 1992). In relation to the 'Chinese migration'² to the West, until the 1970s and the 1980s, the literature exclusively portrays Chinese men as those who left their families and moved to Europe to earn a livelihood. Chinese men are described as leaving China to be employed either in catering services or factories in the UK and they sent the remittances back home, while the women remained to care for the family (Kawar, 2004).

From the 1960s onwards, some scholars started to consider gender in the study of international migration, particularly to recognize the relevant role that women play in these processes (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). A gender-specific approach focuses on the circumstances under which men and women become transnational migrants and the different outcomes of this decision for them (Chant, 2000). Scholars of migration, who adhere the gender perspective (Boyd and Grieco, 2003; Carling, 2005), argue that there are coalescing factors that probably influenced the representation of the 'Chinese diasporas', as well as many other diasporic movements as male-centered, or at least gender-neutral processes. Some of these are the macro level economic factors or the development of a country; the gender roles and household power relationships; gendered immigration policies; the demand for labour in the receiving country; the organization of networks that stimulate migration, immigration policies, class and material inequalities. All these factors need to be studied under a gendered perspective to understand how they influence women's and men's decisions to move and consequently resettle in the new country. These factors have influenced the immigration of men and women in the host countries and determined their positions in the labour market and/or in the domestic space.

² This includes people from Hong Kong.

This literature, therefore highlights the importance of understanding gender in order to theorise migration. The following review illustrates how gender shapes the decision of moving and resettlement in transnational diasporas and other migration flows. The ethnographic examples are drawn from transnational and international migration (Man, 1995; Kofman, 2000; Mahler and Pessar, 2006), economic and networking theories (Ceccagno, 2007; Ip and Liu, 2008), and feminist disciplinary perspectives, who include gender in the study of migration (Lawson, 1998; Gisbert et al., 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Furthermore, ethnographic work is recently representing a good point for studying migration.

2.5.1 Gendered factors impacting in migration choice

This section considers some factors that have an impact on the choice of migration for women and men: economics, gendered immigration policies, and household power relationships. It shows how these have an impact on the Asian diasporas in Europe.

Scholars have observed that economic factors determine the positions of women and men in migration. Many of the Chinese settled as early as the 1800s (The British museum, 2008, 2009) in London and, took advantage of the economic boom in the UK after WWII, by investing in the restaurant business. These were described to be the men. About 90% of Chinese people lacked education and skills when they arrived to Europe and thereby, joined public kitchens as helpers, learned how to cook and worked on their skills as chefs. Some were also employed in the garment industry (e.g. clothes, shoes and leather) (Ceccagno, 2007; Möhring, 2008; Chen A., 2014). Cologna (2006, 2008) reports that the escalation of Chinese business was due to Chinese flexibility, entrepreneurship initiative, and the saving of capital, through which they could open their own shops. Similarly, the Vietnamese in Britain were described as the refugees who fled the war and the communist domination in their country. Between 1975 and 1978, they arrived in the UK from the refugees camps in Hong Kong and made their living by seeking employment in the garment industry or by opening restaurants and nail salons (The state of the world's refugees, 2000). Anyway, the literature does not specify their gender.

While many migration studies have illustrated Asian migration from the point of view of men, focusing particularly on their entrepreneurship skills while doing business in Europe, it seems that women have remained estranged in this process (Man, 1995; Davin, 1997; Yuval-Davis, 1997; Mahler and Pessar, 2006; Cooke, 2007; Kofman, 2012). Between the 1960s and early 1970s, Chinese women moving abroad were considered as legally and economically dependent on their husbands' visa. Thus, literature has misrepresented them as being a passive force in migration and as a result, their experiences were assimilated to the ones of men (Man, 1995). Women have been considered men's helpers, mothers and housewives and their place was assumed to be in the home. As such, their conditions were not accounted for (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). For instance, migration literature uses phrases such as "migrants and their families" to encompass migrant men and their wives and children (Boyd and Grieco, 2003).

The scarce representation of women in the literature does not help in tackling the phenomenon of female's migration (Man, 1995; Mahler and Pessar, 2006). In reality, women have been travelling either alone or with the men and their families and despite this, they did not figure in traditional migration literature (Tse, 2009). Their presence in the labour force is quite significant as they have been employed and unfortunately, in some cases, even trafficked as manual labourers workforce to Western industries (Lawthom et al., 2013). They have always supported their male counterparts through working in either the catering industry or other low-paid positions. Chinese women have always been active social, political, and economic contributors in the nation of resettlement (Man, 1995), and through the system of remittances they have supported the development of their homeland. The phenomenon of female migration is not recent (Tse, 2009). Tse (2009), argues that women were opening businesses in the UK, such as takeaways. The 'Sweet Mandarin' Chinese restaurant in Manchester, a city with a Chinatown, was managed by three generation women after Lily Kowk, the owner, passed away. Lily Kowk arrived from Hong Kong to Britain in the 1950s and showed great economic and business skills as the sole owner of her restaurant, and was resilient against racial and sexual intimidations from the late night customers.

Between the 1970s and the 1980s, scholars who included women in the literature did not yet raise questions about who migrated, or how traditional migration theory explained migration, and the consequences of having undermined women encompassed within it

(Boyd and Grieco, 2003). Rather, scholars assumed the emancipation and “modernization” of the women’s cultural values and behaviours (Boyd and Grieco, 2003). The development of gender migration eventually focused on differences between women and men explained in terms of gender roles, rather than using social inquiry, such as where people moved to, where they went and how they integrated.

Immigration regulations have impacted women and men differently, particularly on their ability to migrate. The absence of Chinese women abroad was in part due to strict immigration policies, both in China, where the People’s Republic of China (CPR) regime was closed to the West, and in Europe. Other Western countries also maintained discriminatory immigration policies that were even more disadvantageous for the women (Man, 1995). Ip and Liu (2008) offered an example of how the migration policy had an impact on Chinese and Hong Kongese women’s migration to New Zealand. They argued that Chinese women from the mainland were restricted from migrating to New Zealand, where their husbands worked, because the government feared the growth of a new generation of Chinese New Zealanders. Thus, these “anchored wives” were left in China, usually in the villages, caring for their families. For the Chinese men employed overseas, the women represented a home left behind, although it was uncertain whether they would come back to them. However, changes to the policy in 1987 created a reverse gender phenomena. Middle-class women from Hong Kong, fearing the Chinese government, started to move abroad with their children, while the men maintained their business in China and financially provided for the family living abroad. These women were negatively called “astronaut” parents, as they had to travel back and forth to reunite the family. Ip and Liu (2008) argued that these women were the driving force in decision-making in migration, other than their male counterparts, the principal applicants in the General Skilled program³, and took the lead in the return and onward migration processes.

The demand for labour in host countries can be gender-specific and influence the movement of men and women. A large proportion of women and men at present, work in

³A program of selection of immigration skills such as relevant qualifications, language, work experiences in order to obtain a permanent VISA permission in Australia.

irregular jobs with low incomes due to the scarce implementation of labour protection (Lawson, 1998). These jobs have welfare implications, which are crucial for women and men choosing to move to urban destinations. Boyd and Grieco (2003) underlined that Asian females were considered unwelcome to the economy of the receiving countries, which was clearly disadvantageous for their occupational attainments. For instance, the UK migration policy has become stricter with regards to skilled migration. Policy has determined the entry of high-skilled migrants by favouring male sectors and imposing restrictions on whether their spouses could work (Kofman, 2012).

However, whilst an emphasis has been placed on the impact of migration of women, there is a little focus on men (Chant, 2000). In London, Datta et al. (2008) found that men in the early stage of migration also experienced a sense of loss and loneliness. This was related to their masculine identities and gender positions in the new country, as they were often employed in low paid positions such as care work, cleaning, construction and hospitality, which are usually considered feminine. Although, the UK, and many other European countries have opened their doors to high skilled migrants, the number of men who emigrate are more than women. They occupy higher positions, since the competition for these placements concerns employment sectors that are still dominated by men (Datta et al., 2008).

Migration research should also pay attention to the impact of household power dynamics, such as gender ascriptions and roles, the assignment of domestic work, and income-earning responsibilities. The theory has failed to capture the gendered phenomenon of migration. For instance, the economic perspective of the household as the primary decision making in migration (Lawson, 1998) presupposes that the decision of migrating is considered for the benefit of the family. In doing so, it assumes an uncritical unified perspective of the members, equal benefits for the whole family regarding the decision taken, cooperation between members, and harmony. This perspective undermines the home as a site, where members conflict and negotiate different interests and activities, a site of gender ideologies, rules and hierarchical and social obligations. In relation to power relationships in a family, men and women have different interests,

which do not always match, and it may affect decisions regarding who will migrate, to what country and for how long (Lawson, 1998; Lawthom et al., 2013).

Important life events shape decisions of migration and employment participation in the country of destination (Lawson, 1998, 2000). Research studies have confirmed that the number of women migrating abroad voluntarily, as singletons or as mothers has increased (Gabbaccia, 1996; Carling, 2005; Lutz, 2010).

The following section turns to feminist ethnographers to understand how gendered factors like gendered roles and material inequalities in the household impact on women's and men's choice of migration. This perspective is particularly useful since the social and cultural background of the women in this research is entangled with the household space. Sexual roles, class and materiality, greatly impact on the choice and possibility of migrating, to the South-East Asian women of this research.

2.5.2 Feminist ethnographers on gender migration: the household

A branch of feminist ethnographers studies the patriarchal model of the household, or the construction of labour in the house. This offers the possibility to understand the impact that a change in labour participation would have for men and women, on household budgets, and on children's welfare (Lawson, 1998). Feminists have found that women's positions within the household and the division of labour explains the mobility of women and men. For instance, gendered expectations of females having resources in order to be marriageable, prompted a temporary migration response of Bolivian daughters from their original household to the urban labour market (Gisbert et al., 1994). Gisbert et al. (1994) studied the case of young migratory unmarried Bolivians in the Campero and Mizque rural peasant provinces. For these peasant communities, exchange of dowry during their marriage was important. However, the rapid changes due to the commercialisation and privatisation of agriculture in Bolivia reduced the chances to do so, and left these families landless. As a consequence, both young males and females migrated to the cities to raise money for their dowry. Interestingly, in a culture that favors males over females, the females were those who migrated in great numbers as the limited amount of land that was left, was inherited by the son; and the females lived with the stigma of being unmarried daughters. In this situation, the female gender position

was disadvantaged within the household and community. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) studied how the migration of single women and men from Mexico to the USA was situated within the context of patriarchal relations, with the result of very different household power struggles for women and men. She points at how the persistence of gender differences within the household was contrasted by the changing political-economic conditions that rendered these gender positions more fluid in Mexican families during the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) also illustrated how gender relations impacted on mobility. She found that migration of males to the USA, was seen as a way to assert masculinity and independence from their fathers and the families. In contrast females, who lived with their families under the patriarchal authority of the father, could not change their status in the same way as the men. The authority of the father was exerted through arguments on morality, sexuality and the need for protection of women migrants. Findings showed that those young and single women who migrated to USA came from families in which the father was absent. Moreover, the women who migrated had a husband whom they joined and migrated as part as a family unit, rather than as single and unmarried women.

Gender relations however, were not ambiguous or unchanging. With the absence of men from a household, women responsibilities and work changed and added to these women a sense of independence and power within their households, which they identified as “*mujer fuerte*” (strong woman). The malleability of the strong patriarchal control is demonstrated when a young woman, who wanted to migrate to the USA, threatened her father that she would marry a man whom he despised and thus, obtained consent to migrate.

Additionally, feminists add material inequalities as an important factor among household members. Class biases, in spite of patriarchy, explain migration decisions and their consequences. This has contributed to the understanding of why migration occurs and how it impacts on migrants from distinct class positions. As the members of dominant classes control the productive capital, they make strategic choices to migrate. On the other hand, the subordinate members are more likely to migrate as a survival strategy to the changes occurring in the production system, over which they have no control (Shrethsa, 1988).

Kay (1988) has studied how gender and class diversified the impact of exile in Chilean married couples who were refugees in Britain. She found a gender gap in the involvement in public and domestic spheres by listening to their biographic accounts. On the one hand, middle-class men were distressed regarding the loss of power and autonomy, in relation to their present jobs, and on the other hand working men were experiencing a loss of collective power that they gained from participation in labour movements in Chile. Women who worked outside the home were concerned about the lack of domestic support abroad, while they wanted to continue working. The housewives lamented a loss of parental help, which was the foundation of their domestic power and faced devaluation as mothers in Britain. This study, thus, illustrated how the division and the position of women and men in public and private areas is not unchangeable, but shifts and models through the changes in the distribution of power in the host and original societies.

Since the 1960s, international migration theory has embraced gender and has sought to question the experiences of migrants. There is also a more thoughtful contribution of females in migration and migration policies of females, as studies voice their positions and differences (Mahler and Pessar, 2006; Kofman, 2000). However, there is a risk that the over-emphasis on women in migration will give less attention to the men. The gendered approach to migration therefore, is a response to the literature about the relevant position that both women and men have had when migrating, in relation to decision-making and family transitions, family economics and the economy of the states which they move to (Mahler and Pessar, 2006; Kofman, 2000; Man, 1995).

2.6 Summary

This chapter has explored diasporas and transnationalism and the complexity of defining groups in migration in particular to these approaches. Although diasporas and transnationalism offer an important contribution in the discourse of migration and mobility, it is important to remember that they are not isolated. In order not to essentialise migration and take for granted the idea of a common sense of belonging, other approaches such as gender migration and the feminist ethnography have been

presented as a promising alternative. The literature review has suggested that feminist ethnography of migration could be useful to throw light on diverse and more subjective aspects of migration. The chapter has addressed gendered migration and feminist ethnographic viewpoints on gender for tackling female migration. These approaches promise a fairer perspective on migrant's decision to move and resettle, as compared to the traditional migration theories. They work with gender inequalities to tackle women's vulnerability, agency and resourcefulness in migration. Feminist household theory (Lawson, 1998, 2000), described in the last section, is particularly interesting for this research. It recounts about the cultural aspects of the feminisation of migration flows, and it is also relevant for the South-East Asian women in the UK and suggests new areas to explore in regard to diasporas as a material phenomena. The feminist ethnography of the household is a space that needs to be explored to shed light on many aspects regarding the link between female migration, belonging and place. It suggests spaces like the family, home and the ordinary lifespace of people, rather than looking at people as a unique group. Gendered migration results in a holistic approach between the intersection of a number of factors in migration, and the consideration given to women and men within diverse spaces such as the society, the state and especially the home (Cresswell and Uteng, 2008; Meah, 2017). The following chapter explores the literature of sense of place and place-making.

Chapter 3
Place studies
Sense of place and place-making in migration

3.1 Introduction to chapter

The literature regarding “sense of place” is quite broad. Therefore, for the purpose of this research this review presents the most relevant points from human geography, philosophy, sociology and cultural anthropology. In particular, it includes the scholars who embrace a phenomenological standpoint and utilize interpretative frameworks such as poststructuralism, postcolonial, social and postmodern theories. The following chapter is divided in four sections. The first section explores the meanings attributed to “sense of place” by different scholars. This part focuses on “sense of place” as belonging in migration. The second section, illustrates place-making in the city, since migratory fluxes are mostly directed to urban spaces. Here, the spatial analysis of the city is presented. This follows one group of scholars who interrogate city spaces as place-making, and a second group who argue the contested and rebellious spirit of the city spaces. The third section, presents the postmodern theories of space, with a focus on the idea of a global or transnational home (Massey, 1994). The fourth section concludes this summary with directions for future research with non-representational theory (Thrift, 2008).

Throughout the discussion, the relationship between place and space is thought of as two inter-related categories for the analysis of place-making (Agnew, 2011). The study of place and space is human analysis (Malpas, 2012), since it enhances our understanding of issues relating to mobility, identity and belonging. Since people are moving, and their goods and ideas are circulating with them, the experience of the city is challenging and diverse. The thesis embraces the study of place in order to explore how migrants resettling in multicultural societies build their belonging and bonds to the new places and generate new meanings of home and livable cities.

3.2 “Sense of place” in the literature

Place has been conceptualized by some as the affective and spiritual bounding to places that individuals inhabit, whilst others have emphasized upon the relational and mutual experience of place. Tuan (1975, 1979), conceives the human nature as ‘placefull’ or

embedded in the sensual. Based on the spatial referents and localizations utilized to describe human's topographical positions, the author argues that there is a 'sociological' localization, that he calls topophilia. Tuan's Topophilia (1972) is the affective bond that individuals have with places through their whole sets of aesthetic, emotional, tactual, and spiritual responses (Tuan, 1975; 1979). This is expressed through intimate feelings of proximity and distance to things and places. Such ties vary in intensity, nuance, and modes of expression. The longer the individuals stay in a place, more spiritual is their relation to a place. Fields of care, where people invest their time in their everyday life (i.e. parks, homes, drugstores, taverns, neighbourhood and markets), is the expression of rootedness and care to place, where people are bound to their material environments. This thesis takes inspiration by this theoretical position (see Chapter 9, The Market). Tuan's (1972) ideas are particularly interesting for three reasons. First, the emphasis on the spirituality and emotional bonding to place which focuses on the importance of everyday space and people's material interactions in it. Second, the idea of cosmologies (Tuan 1972), inspired by indigenous psychology, deconstructs the idea of space and place in traditional maps. Cosmologies are sketches of how other civilizations understand place and the world that they inhabit. These models are rather embedded in humans' sensorial. Third, the attention paid to the environmental perception with the study of the senses.

Relph, argues that place is '*... an integral lived structure in human experience*' (qtd. in Seamon and Sowers, 2008: 45) in which association is a human need. Everyday life is the battered ground, wherein people construct their synesthetic knowledge about the world. Place is the distinctive association between individuals and communities to spaces through a combination of different arousals, feelings, orientations and body-actions. Specifically, Relph (Seamon and Sowers, 2008) considers two experiences of association in the environments: insideness and outsideness. Insideness, is the deepest sense of place and includes feelings of safety, enclosure and easiness which are associated with the home. Outsideness refers to alienation and the concept of not belonging. These two dimensions coexist dialectically in a human's relationship with places and, thus place results from a combination of the two. Even though the idea of the relationality of place is appreciable, Relph's (Seamon and Sowers, 2008) idea of insideness and outsideness seems to exclude the spaces in between, which are important in either topographical or

cultural terms. For instance, the margins conceptualized by Anzaldúa (1987) are places of vivid cultural creativeness and existentialism.

Other scholars argue for place as a cultural production. Hay (1998), argues that Maori people in New Zealand nurture a territorial attachment to their place, with a genealogical transmission of different styles of place-attachment. He distinguishes a parental and ancestral transmission of codes in Maori culture from a more personal sense of place developed by migrant people. He, then, considers ancestry and culture as fundamental for a '*rooted sense of place*' (Hay, 1998). Hay's idea makes an important contribution to the study of place by providing an anthropological reference to the ancestry and collectiveness of place, those which inhabit the worlds of cultural groups in different ways. However, his idea of a territorial versus a more personal sense of place between the Maori people and the migrant fails to reflect an understanding of migrant cultures. For decades, the Maori people have been threatened and fought against the pressures of having their land being taken away from them. Indeed, diasporist scholarships have affirmed that threatened populations emphasize their ties with the land (Cohen, 2008). Moreover, migrant people experience and preserve their family and ancestral roots whilst emplacing their cultures abroad. This thesis looks at the collective and personal cultures of place that migrant people construct abroad.

Sociologist Cross (2001) considers the relational aspects of place in relation to residence and neighbourhood. She interviewed local residents of a neighbourhood in Nevada County and state that there are about seven forms of individuals' bonding: biographical, spiritual, ideological, narrative, commodified and dependent. She also considered place from the viewpoint of the community attachment and categorized it into rootedness cohesive and rootedness divide, place alienation, relativity and uncommitted placelessness (Cross, 2001). For Cross (2001), sense of place is not just limited to the feelings and meanings of the individuals related to a place. Instead, the types of bonds that she discussed illustrate how history, family relationships, the mythical and narrative, the political, and the financial availabilities are all elements that influence sense of place. Although, Cross (2001) recognizes place as a collective and cultural production, in reality, the categorizations limit the meanings of "sense of place". This thesis seeks to explore

these and alternative forms of sense of place. Sociologist Frémont (1976) argues about the 'lived space' (1976: 288), or the singular geographical experience of a human's environment throughout perception, emotions, affections and motility. This experience is felt and shared through cultural symbols and artistic forms that are typical of a society. For instance, the architectures, arts, music etc. By virtue of these cultural codes, sense of place is a communicable and co-operative form of emplacement. However, whilst Frémont (1976) considers place as an artistic production, yet individuals are deceived and limited by dominant cultural discourses through the arts.

Some scholars have described the relation to place as sensual and/or material. Cresswell (2004) argues that place-making is the way people transform living spaces to feel in place. Place-making is the individual's engagement in everyday activities such as cooking, gardening, home decoration and arranging the furniture, and even activities such 'put your own posters on the wall' (Cresswell, 2004: 2), as they demonstrate how individuals choose to see their world. This idea is particularly significant for this thesis as puts an emphasis on the ordinariness of actions. The idea will be developed further in the following section.

Contemporary philosopher Malpas (2012), sees humans as topologically constrained within the spatio-temporal forms and structure of their actions. Place is, according to him, *'...the dynamic opening that occurs within bonds which makes possible the determination of the human.'* (Malpas 2012: 11). Individuals, however, are not determined by their topological nature. Instead, he believes that social events are occasions for individuals to abide by these spatio-temporal determinations, through the richness of meanings and further dimensions of their existences that are created by social actors. Particular attention will be paid to his idea of gathering events in Chapter 8, The Banquet, particularly speaking about how multi-directional connections and simultaneity transgress human topological localizations.

Other scholars, like geographer Farinelli (2009), write about place as a site of imagination, which is rather independent from the localization of the individuals. As such, place is always remade and reinvented through the work of memory, sentiments, and fantasy,

which is contrary to the geometrical and geographical idea of space. Appadurai (1996) defines cities as ethnoscapas; arguing that place is shaped and re-shaped by human's mobility and interactions, rather than being a coherent space. The global perspective looks at the multi-attachments to places that individuals form in the course of their lives, and proposes a transnational and mobile sense of place, going beyond ethnicity and the community linkages. Massey (1994), considers place as mere human localizations. Indeed, even the smallest places such as Kilburn road (in north London) are connected to the global system through material and virtual interchanges of goods and information. This thesis aims at developing these ideas for better understanding diasporas and migration and alternative forms of belonging that people can produce.

Place is also described as the experience of home, although it may not necessarily coincide with it. Georgiou, who sees home as '*..a special, intense and emotional space and symbol for diaspora*' (2006: 160), argues that place is not local. It can extend to different places and across scales of belonging and attachment. Place can be the domestic space, the family, the city where people live, the country of birth, the symbolic home, the transnational context or all of these forms simultaneously. Place has therefore a localized and decentralized nature at the same time. The concept of simultaneity of place is also mentioned by Spivack (2013) in the way she talks about transnationalism. Cultural studies look at how culture influences the idea of belonging. Contrarily, scholars believe that place is not always a positive and unifying experience.

Scholars have also used sense of place to question the ideas of displacement and unrootedness in the country of origins or in the host country. Particularly, since home can also be a discomforting experience. Anzaldúa (1987), argues that there are 'places of contradictions', such as the borders in her own country, where the *mestizia* (i.e. individuals with mixed heritage) struggle between the domination of the White culture and the fear of abandoning their mother's culture. Anzaldúa (1987), recounts place as the attachment to her culture, particularly to the Creole language that Chicano Spanish speak. The Chicano Spanish is a language of the border, a mix of English, Castilian Spanish, the North Mexican dialect and Tex-MexCatalan, which is not formally recognized as a language. This language has been created by the Chicanos as a way to express the deep meaning of feeling in place. It is relevant the richness from which these displaced

experiences are generated. This idea is relevant to the thesis, since it introduces a thirdspace, the space of the margins, against the geometry of space.

Place may not necessarily coincide with the experience of community ties and identification with other migrants from the same ethnic background. Ahmed (1999), contests that place is not always the attachment of a community to a location, or sharing of the same identity and belonging. She thinks about place from the perspective of what migrant communities are and what it means to be part of a community, once they are formed abroad. The physical space that individuals weave together or shared identities do not lead to the creation of a relational experience of place. These communities are seen as processes of construction and negotiation of different aspects of the life of migrants abroad. In order to describe a relational place Ahmed (1999), uses the example of a collection of essays edited in 1994 by 'The Asian women's writing collective' in the UK. In this collection, various women share a common experience of estrangement related to migrating to the UK. This collection forms a community through which they negotiate their boundaries and meanings, not on identitarian basis (such as, being 'Asian', 'writers' and 'women'), but through sharing feelings of 'not being fully at home'. This example described how sense of place and the formation of communities is a circular process. A shared sense of place is a point from which communities and/or groups emerge, not necessarily based on their ethnicity but through shared mundane and migratory experiences. Furthermore, these communities form through artistic and pragmatic encounters. This example is very pertinent for the ideas of communities and cultural production in relation to place, which the thesis explores.

Further research has described place as home and has moved toward defining home as homemaking practices (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Particularly, in times of globalisation and the rise of transnational fluxes, the home needs a new definition. This part will be covered in Chapter 3, Foodways. The ideas presented in the section, cover individual and relational aspects of place, i.e. the multiple diversified attachments that individuals develop with different communities, families abroad, and other networking. It also briefly introduces place as a human artifact and the concept of place-making. The following

section focuses on dwelling experiences of place-making with examples from the public spaces.

3.3 Dwelling experiences: convivial practices and place-making

Dwelling is more than simply inhabiting a place. It is about how individuals feel and make place through their ordinary dwelling practices (Cresswell, 2004). This section introduces briefly the concept of dwelling experience and place-making through Merleau-Ponty's (1962) and Casey's (1996) theories of embodiment. It also presents some examples of dwelling practices, such as conviviality, to discuss how place is embodied in everyday experiences of migrants. Rituals and celebrations that entail the preparation, consumption and sharing of food create convivial urban spaces.

Scholars of place, who relate to Heidegger's existentialism (1927) and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (1962), consider dwelling the ontological organization of existence through place-making. The emphasis is posed on human practices and the structured spatial forms of human existence through the body. Merleau-Ponty (1962: 146) argues that '*the body is our general medium for having a world*' while Casey (1996: 104), argues that we are '*bound by body to be in place*'. Thus, individuals are considered as dynamic actors or '*constituting subjects*' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 406). This means, that place and space are experiences embedded in the body's intentionality and precognitive inclinations to action and locomotion, which naturally expand the range of senses of human beings. While the individuals perceive, they create the world in a personal, sensorial, kinesthetic and tactile manner. Similarly, Casey (1996) describes place as being out of the sphere of the feelings and the senses. He argues that the essentialist nature of place is present in the forms of structural and fixed emplacements. He believes that 'in-placeness' is a condition that pre-exists and coexists with the individuals' emplacement in the world and that individuals '*more even than earthling are placing*' (Casey, 1996: 19). Individuals not only are in-place, but also are constituted of place. Place is implicated in the body movement and locomotion through spatial references (i.e. here-there, near-far, up-down, above-below, right-left etc.), gestures and routines. The way the body moves and is prompted to move, is how the individuals perceive place at different scales, such as

in position, room, or region. There are positions of space and time where bodies may suffer displacement, but since they inhabit and move through the world occupying different positions in time and space, they are never placeless.

Given the “placeling” nature of the individuals, the following examples illustrate conviviality, a dwelling practice, as a phenomenological experience embedded in and expressed through the body, through which migrants create emplacement in their country of resettlement. In some of these examples, food is also implicated. An example of conviviality as place-making is given by Heil (2015: 41), who argues that:

..living a transnational life means to be involved at home with people around the globe, and in the place of current residence.

Heil (2015) explores the experiences of everyday living of the Senegalese through practices of conviviality, which was enhanced when they were resettling in Catalonia (Spain). He states that the Senegalese migrants, who do not speak the local language, used linguistic and greeting practices from their Senegalese culture in their daily encounters with the other foreigners in the city. Senegalese migrants used their bodies to invite and express friendly feelings and make the city warmer and more comfortable after their arrival. The relationships of conviviality helped the migrants make a home abroad by ‘translating’ their social Senegalese practices of welcoming a member of their community, or a guest from another community, into the local cultural context.

Pedersen (2013), in an ethnographic study of Iraqi women in Copenhagen, describes how the women organised religious gatherings in mosques or in their homes where they practiced faith, socialised and exchanged food. This helped them to build networks within the diasporic community. While, their religious celebrations and community gatherings created spaces that made them look like outsiders in the Danish society; these practices were important processes to participate fully in the host society. By retaining their cultural rituals, they could feel at home and engage better with the social life of the host country. The religion, therefore, not only created dwelling spaces, but also an opportunity to enhance practices that strengthened their belonging to the local society.

There are positions of displacement that are repaired by convivial attitudes (Gunaratam, 2018). Gunaratam (2018), shows how place is made through shared material and spaces within a temporary home for refugees in London and Oxford. A shared fridge, cupboard, and drawer in these host houses, where these people make their living and where food is offered to the guests, show how conviviality can create conditions for displaced people to feel at home.

This section has shown the embodiment of place and the forms of conviviality as place-making for migrants, who resettled in another country. This thesis focuses on every day routines of migrant city dwellers and includes conviviality as a place-making practice. The following section delves into the idea of 'the city as home' by looking at how different scholarships have engaged with this idea.

3.4 The city as home

Migrants travelling in other countries initially consider settling in the cities. Whilst the home is usually considered a private space, this section aims at presenting the city as home (Blunt and Bonnerjee, 2013), by including research on domesticated public spaces (Law, 2001; Koch and Latham, 2014) and the city as a dwelling place (Low, 1996; Seamon and Nordin, 1980). It takes into consideration the contradictions that migrant's encounter while making the city their own home, a place that is continuously reinvented to make it more habitable. In doing so, it opens to new ideas of home a place which is far less localized. Home is often seen in the literature as a locale, the private sphere, the housework, the women's place- through household activities, and how those indeed extend it into the public space. The section is organized in two parts that illustrate scholarly work about the urban space. First the scholars of spatial thinking (Low, 1996, 2014; Seamon and Nordin, 1980), illustrate how public spaces, such as open markets or squares, are considered important sites for encounters and place-making. Migrants adapt to the city where they resettle, domesticate these spaces and change and transform cities. This sheds light on issues of migration, belonging, home-making, and participation. Second philosophers consider how the politics of the state constrain city dwellers in their movements and actions in the city. Borders, nations, and identities are crucial in the

definition of place and belonging, as the state sets who can and can't access and feel part of it.

3.4.1 Making home in the city through spatial practices

Spatial thinking is an operative lens to look at spatial forms of reality through users' performances, the built environment and materiality of everyday life. In particular, theorists of spatial thinking argue that individuals use and transform the spaces where they live through their actions. This section discusses the pragmatic analysis of place and argues the city as a stage for the analysis. The city is thought of as either a place of limitation (Relph, 2008, 2009) or creation (Latham and McCormack, 2004, 2007; Koch and Latham, 2014) through the individuals' spatial practices.

Geographers of social space focus on the urban (Seamon and Nordin 1980; Pred, 1984; Law, 2001, 2005; Low, 1996, 2014; Relph, 2008, 2009) due to the transformations that cities are undergoing. Globalisation, new technologies, the flow of people (Marramao, 2013), the politics of urban spaces, and the modern architecture planning for the expansion of the city are changing the relationship that individuals have with their dwelling places (Law, 2005). This seems particularly problematic for migrants, who have to relocate and try to fit into aesthetically and culturally different environments. However, these scholars start a cultural, contextual and pragmatic analysis of space-use to illustrate places, where the meaning of belonging is continuously generated, rather than suppressed, through their practices. Place-making is a human strategy set against the commodification of the city and the reduction of social spaces. Cities are places which are reinvented and transformed by humans's work. Individuals, re-inscribe meanings and reshape the space to make the city as home. This thesis does not look at how institutional projects impede the migrant women abroad, but at how their spatial practices rebuild the city as their home. This research takes inspiration from these scholars to illustrate how urban space is transformed by individuals' everyday practices to create a city as home.

Scholars like Pred (1984) dispute the idea that place and human emplacement are processes embedded in forms of power or 'institutional projects'. Whilst the paths or

movements of people, through space and time create place through their coalescing bibliographies, they are shaped and constricted by social structures and cultural formations which individuals produce through their social relationships. In particular, Pred (1964) argues that body-subjects are differentiated by social divisions, that allow motilities for some, whilst they impede others in the city. He studied the link between place, work and housing in 19th century American industrial cities. He found that the blue-collars workers in Manhattan, could afford to commute from home to their workplaces, rather than living close to them, unlike the less-skilled workers.

Relph (in Seamon and Sowers, 2008) distinguishes between a geography of local and a geography of placelessness, arguing that the latter has succeeded the former through the construction of anonymous spaces and environments in the city, to replace significant places for individuals and their communities. Placelessness is the imposition, uniformity, standardization and uncritical acceptance of societal values, and the exasperation of the value of efficiency over places in the era of capitalism and mass globalisation. The placelessness experience alienates and disconnects the individuals from their own experience of place. Therefore, according to Relph (2008, 2009: 31), a pragmatic sense of place requires a re-discovery of the local through:

...artworks, festivals that awaken sense of place, promoting of supermarket chains which sell local produce, and advocates of the slow-food movement and regional cuisine.

Seamon (1980) studied the gathering character of certain urban spaces. He argued that people recollect their sense of place, when they traverse within particular places of the city for their ordinary routines. Seamon (1980) looks at individuals' "body-ballet". In his spatial analysis, he observes the movements of bodies that perform daily activities, such as driving, shopping, cooking, and typing. He focuses on the way individuals come together and develop a daily time-space routine through choreographies, yet unchoreographed movements, similar to ballets performances in a market square in Stockholm. Place-ballets in urban spaces such as marketplaces, cafes, lounges, office buildings or shopping malls, become significant stages for patterns of practice to emerge. Seamon (1980) talks about the embodied and dramatic aspects of place, which is of great

value for this research for seeing places as human processes rather than static and geographic entities. However, individual paths here look more like routines and patterns with a certain regularity, ignoring a pattern of deviation, which is also the norm, due to the impact of external factors.

Low (1996, 2014) offers a view of the square (the plaza) as a site of encounters, a lively center and symbol of city life, whose meanings are contested by the city dwellers. Sense of place in the city is often an ambiguous sentiment between the cultural place-making of users in conflict with the ideologies promoted by the state and the planners. Space is the combination of social production and social construction or of structure, experience, and practice. Social production develops through historic, political, economic, technological and ideological factors, which are realized by the environmental setting of humans; whereas for the ideological, reference is made to planners and urban engineers who design spaces. Social construction develops through the users' phenomenological experiences of transformation of the material setting into symbolic and cultural meanings through social exchanges, memories, images, the mundane use of things, conflict and control. This second aspect considers the affective and social use of space. The observation of everyday activities of migrants gives an insight into how they concretely move, attend or occupy public spaces in the city, the spaces that they leave out or could not access, the special encounters that they have in these spaces, how they resist space narratives from the state and make new narratives through their movement and activities. Low (1996, 2014) captures these through sketched maps. It also illustrates how these places prime encounters or divide people in a city.

Latham and McCormack (2009), during a tour in Berlin discover abandoned places which found fame due to the graffiti-laden walls. They observed how these spaces were revitalized through the artwork of artists and the city dwellers who came to see the graffiti. They transform and give new meanings to depraved places of the city through the material artwork.

This section has discussed relevant analysis of urban space and how individuals ordinarily contest dominant ideologies of space through their practices such as gatherings, walking,

performing festivals, artwork etc. For the purpose of this research, the pragmatic analysis of space through map-making is paramount. This research aims at illustrating place-making through food practices, and how migrants domesticate public spaces to feel and transform the city as their home. The following section reflects on the critical approaches to the city. They look at the city as a contested space, due to the politics of estrangement and alienation operated by the state, and the agency of city dwellers who resist those.

3.4.2 Critical place-making: struggle and resistance

In 1980s critical scholars developed approaches towards geography of power and progressive geography (Lefebvre, 1970, 2014; 1984). It is in this context that sociologists and philosophers from neo-marxism (Lefebvre, 1970, 2014; 1984; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), cultural critique (Harvey, 1989) and global postmodern theory (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Soja, 1996; Massey, 1994; Braidotti, 2011) have engaged in the political struggle and resistance through the analysis of space. The section summarizes the literature of philosophers who regard the limitations of city spaces with a strong political charge. It shows how these spaces of limitation interfere with the process of belonging and home-making for migrants in the city. However, these scholars make a claim for political and participatory forms of engagement of individuals and groups to the city. The struggle against the state is a revolution against the production and commodification of space (Lefebvre, 1970, 2014). Counter-spaces (Lefebvre, 1984) here are fundamental for the re-appropriation of place by individuals. Place-making is to resist the deterritorialization and decentralization operated by the state. This thesis looks only transversally at the ideologies of space and how they impede the movement of migrant women. Instead, it focuses on how their daily practices organize a movement which transgresses these ideologies. These counter-spaces are presented in their rich theoretical analysis through ideas such as city-opera (Lefebvre, 1984), thirdspace (Soja, 1996), tactics (DeCerteau, 1984), and nomadic space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Braidotti, 2011). This thesis takes from this analysis the inspiration for the development of a new human, symbolic and transitional space. This is paramount to describe the everyday life of people who experience displacement and alienation in the city due to their status as migrants.

Lefebvre (1984) and Soja (1996) discuss a tri-dimensional space which consists of, hidden and neglected spaces where individuals recover aspects of belonging in the city. Lefebvre (1984), describes space as a social product. He claims that only the reinvention and re-appropriation of the social product (i.e. the space) can change the society. Lefebvre (1974, 2014; 1984) introduces a tripartite model of space, where three different spaces are in a dialectical negotiation and resistance: the perceived space (how things are in the world), the conceived space (the ideologies of space) and the lived space (space of representation or what the people do in their everyday life). The conceived space, ideological and discursive, is the work table of planners, architects and urban scientists who conceive, plan and design spatiality according to theoretical models and ideologies. They impose those ideologies to city dwellers who direct their spatial conducts and relations accordingly. The lived space is the social space where the state exerts its control. Here, individuals enact their spatial practices, everyday routines, work and social activities, indulging in mundane tasks such as cooking, shopping and other domestic practices, through a practicing and perceiving body. This space, also defined as representational by Lefebvre (1984), is the place of imagination and symbolism, where the ideologies of space are sought to be changed by the users of space through modes of production. These are art, poetry, and other art forms where individuals express and perform alternative spaces.

Lefebvre (1970, 2014) argues that in an urban society inhabitants appropriate urban spaces according to their needs. They weave together and engage in meaningful realizations and discourses about the city. These gatherings or spaces of self-management (i.e. *l'autogestion*) build a common awareness of the differences among individuals, which they handle and understand in order to reach a common purpose. It is in this lived, relational and communal space that the migrants counteract and transgress the politics of the city-spaces through engagement, exchange and encounters. They also resist the ideas of globalisation, urbanization, and cultural stereotypes. Lefebvre (1970, 2014) also considers the urban society to be an assemblage of spatial configurations. These spaces are emerging throughout the city and the duty of human geographers is to look at them. This research explores these particularly hidden spaces in the city. Furthermore, Lefebvre's (1973) new revolutionary program towards the 'opera-city' includes the 'feast' as a major step in the revolution against the state. In the feast, the ideological dialectics

that regulate the neo-liberal cultures and societies, such as work and leisure time, the normal and mundane, the insider and outsider etc., are defeated.

Soja (1996), brings the analysis a step further by drawing from '*The production of space*' (Lefebvre, 1974, 2014), where he reinterprets the trialectic perspective. The tripartite model of space is an epistemological inquiry that responds to the political situation over the use of city spaces. Soja (1996) calls the space of the spatial practice the firstplace. This is where material life takes place through everyday routines, action and behaviors and all the forms of producing social spatiality. The secondspace is the reign of the mental, the language, the text and the discourses that experts use to implant ideologies. For Soja (1996) it is also the place of thought, vision and utopia, and for this reason it is the physical setting for artists. Thirdspace is the space of the symbolic and it is the reactive space where not only artists, but also people in general try to describe and change the world. Here imagination combines with reality, and tries to appropriate the space and change it through investing with symbolic meanings and physical things. Thus, thirdspace is a political space for emancipatory praxis to restore equality and spatial justice (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987), and an endless open space of knowledge, production and creativity. This research explores the spatial and material urban as well as domestic spaces of migrants. It also looks at how materiality is reworked in the space of the symbolic and the relational to create new meanings of being.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and DeCerteau (1984), see the movement of pedestrian city dwellers as practices to resist the power of the state. First, by stating that this movement is the nature of humans and second as active resistance. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) propose a dialectic description of space. They distinguish between smooth and striated spaces. Flows of things and people which emerge in globalisation (smooth spaces) exist in correlation and in contrast to the political force of the state apparatus (striated space). The smooth space is given in the natural motion of the 'nomad'⁴ who moves without limits in any direction and fluidly distributes across the territory. Its motion creates non-linear and non-measurable spaces, as the nomads change their orientations freely. Thus the nomad becomes a threat for the state. This motion is naturally creative and

⁴ The 'nomad' is here a metaphor for the migrant.

aggressive as opposed to the forces of the state that operate throughout a striated space, which it directs and controls. Striated spaces are homogeneous and static representations of space. These can be in gridded maps, where space is always represented through linear and metric indexes, based on optical, spatial and hierarchical references. This influences the way people position themselves in their living places, within the scale of society, and in the geo-political space. The way the nomad opposes naturally to the state, is the way migrants with their crossing borders, activities, and practices develop an affective and sensual relations to space.

DeCerteau (1984), one of the pioneers of the 'space of resistance', in *'The practice of everyday life'* (DeCerteau, 1984), he describes a city as an alien place to the dwellers. This is due to politics of obligation and prohibition and the construction of physical impediments like walls, which impose certain paths, forbid others, and rule and constrain individual's movements. Furthermore, place naming (e.g. toponymy), the concatenation of streets names and numbers, codes and spatial signifiers used to describe individual's positions in space are some ways in which political power is directed to limit and control the city dwellers. However, a pedestrian's movement is a site of resistance and a mode of re-appropriation of the city space. Space, he argues, is the order and coexistence of things in their locations, the configuration of positions that have a certain stability and routine. Conversely, place considers the movements that occur within it. Places exist in the series of pedestrian trails who travel the city, and are tactile and the kinesthetic experiences of the space. DeCerteau (1984) describes how pedestrians transform the signifiers of space with their actions into new possibilities and prohibitions, which transcend beyond the limitations of crossing, drifting away, deviations, and taking shortcuts. Thus, the movements that migrants undertake with their bodies regularly to navigate within spaces of the city, are 'tactics' that they use to resist impositions and transform the places where they live.

The following section discusses home in times of globalisation, and presents arguments related to the theory of the world as a home (Massey, 1994; Braidotti, 2011) and the implications that the theory has within the current research.

3.4.3 Towards a global sense of place

In this section, the ideas of place as locale in the form of the home and/or the city are theorized by globalisation scholars. Globalisation shapes relationships between local places and the motilities of people giving rise to new forms of inquiry.

Many scholars respond to globalisation as an aggressive threatening and a 'domicide' (Porteous and Smith, 2001) against the making of home and sense of place (Relph 1976; Augè, 1995). They move towards the elimination of place as a subject of study and a living dimension, since they view globalisation as a rather radical approach to homogenizing places. They oppose the argument that globalisation create more opportunities for migrants to feel at home or the home is everywhere and everyone is always at home, through the possibility of services, such as those that deliver foodstuffs across the world to one's doorstep and people moving, which transplants places and things creating a sort of 'at home' in the host country (Valentine and Bell, 1997). Relph (1976) finds the antithesis of this proclaimed placefulness of globalisation in the idea of placelessness, a place with no-quality or the sameness encountered in any landscape. He sustains that this is particularly serious in times of mass-commodification of cultures and environments. Others sustain that urban places are featured with non-meeting places and scarce opportunities of congregation (Latham, 1999). Latham (1999), argues that modern cities are structured with the illusion of people converging to the same places, whereas in reality they live their lives with the total indifference of the 'other'. He argues for a domestication of space of the city, where new forms of engagement, sociality and solidarity can take place. Appadurai (1996) sees globalisation as a progressive transcending of territorialities where the concept of homeland becomes a quasi-utopian place. Homeland, for Appadurai (1996), is a fantasy produced by the de-territorialization of the world. He proposes to look at place from the viewpoint of global ethnoscapes. These are landscapes of mobile groups and individuals from everywhere in the world, such as migrants, tourists, travelers, and other moving groups which are shaped by the places they inhabit. Therefore, communities and villages are non-localized or spatially bounded or culturally homogeneous and with a unique sense of history. They are emplacements and aggregations shaped by the physical and imaginary mobility of humans, who either want to move or have to move. These ethnic groups transcend

territorialization and specific characterizations and create new identities and histories. For instance, communities which create their boundaries in a precise location, will have members who tend to move away or come in from other areas. Communities are often dispersed in a variety of places rather than being united in one specific place. These scholars spoke about the risks that cultures run in time of globalisation and commodification. However, this does not prove that individuals are placeless. Individuals are active agents who ordinarily transform their culture/s and offer original and unique representations of home in the space of the material and the symbolic (Latham, 1999). Perhaps, these representations have not been the focus of these scholars.

Conversely, Massey (1994) has interpreted globalisation in a positive way. She criticizes the theory of space-time compression along with globalisation and propagated the idea of places as being global in principle. The attachment to locality is something that individuals develop in order to feel rooted, but it can lead to the danger of nationalism (Massey, 1994; Seamon and Sowers, 2008). Especially in the post-modern era, a 'global sense of place' is what Massey (1994) argues even for small places. In her ethnographic work on Kilburn Road (located in North London) she imagines a set of natural, social and cultural connections with the rest of the world, whereas the global enters inadvertently in people's lives through ordinary practices such as shopping at the local groceries or reading the newspaper. Indeed, Massey (1994: 7) argues for an "extroverted" sense of place, a place which has the properties of heterogeneity and pervasiveness of being extended everywhere. She expands on the theory of place as being constituted of mobilities that were proposed by Appadurai (1996) and argues for the interconnections and relations of individuals, ideas and commodities. Place, for Massey (1994), has not one but multiple identities, as it is not an essential fixed configuration. Instead, it is inhabited by difference where people are connected together and through their paths, memories and imagination, their practices and media, and are themselves constituent of the interconnections which shape the world as it is.

Following Massey (1994), Ang (2016), argued from postcolonial and critical standpoints and discussed place and belonging as things that were not as natural and given, but intermingled in transnational processes. The process of place-making is contrary to being smooth and unproblematic for Asian people who are living in Sydney, as it is both

intermingled between the politics of the Australian government, which still sees Australia as a space too distant from them, and the increasing hybridization of Australian cities through globalisation. This characterises places like Chinatown in Sydney, as a 'not yet at home' in Australia, a place which is always 'under construction' and whereas tensions between different Asian groups produce instability.

McCraig (1996) and in later works Braidotti (2011), argue for an elusive concept of home. For example, McCraig defines home as '*that travels with the subject that travels*' (1996: 17) or a mobile sense of home. They reject the idea of a subject belonging to any particular place, and instead argue for a sense of belonging to the globe. In that sense, they argue for a globalized identity where place is an internalization other than being externalized (i.e. internalizing the world like the own home). Ahmed (1999) opposes the concept of the homeless individual. According to Braidotti (2011) the individual is naturally homeless because his place is the globe. However, Ahmed (1999) considers the differences of a voluntary and forced migration. If in the first case, the individual exerts 'the power' of choosing to belong to different homes rather than the national home, whilst forced migration leaves the individuals deprived of their homes. For Ahmed (1999), home is always a point of departure and arrival, in a way that fixity and roots are never definitive in migration, and security could be found in different places and not just one. Furthermore, she argues that home is not one place, but there are many homes that have a sense of continuity.

This section has presented the scholars of globalisation who speak about a global deterritorialized idea of place and propose alternatives to home as a locale. This research takes inspiration from these ideas to support the idea of a mobile and transnational home, rather than a fixed geographical and topographical location, in line with the migration of women who have participated in this research. The scholars presented focused on describing belonging as an uprooting experience. The difficulty with this is that by dismissing the idea of home, they risk abandoning its study in academia, which has only recently delved into understanding the life of migrants. In reality, by dismissing the point of home, it attacks the core idea that home is a crucial need in migration. Furthermore, home and belonging still have unique embodied and

material qualities, as well as cultural and ancestral references. The attachments to places and locations are still 'brought in the home', represented and symbolized through material practices. In this respect, this research looks at home and place giving relevance to these dimensions. The following section concludes this chapter with new directions to the study of place.

3.5 The future of the literature of place. Non-Representationalism

New perspectives are heading towards a multidisciplinary study of place and place-making such as empowering of place, domestication of spaces, multilocality and multivocality of place, and discontinuity of place. Here place is understood through the integration of the local and the global, the personal and the social, with the structural dimensions of the global (Saar and Palang, 2009). The question of place must be redirected to how people endorse different meanings of place, and how they engage in significant and meaningful practices to realize places that encompass the local dimension to connect with a worldwide sense of place (Buttimer, 1976; Latham and McCormack, 2004; Cadman, 2009; Koch and Latham, 2013). Moreover, this scholarship does not compare and confront the different aspects of sense of place, but aims at bringing them together.

Thrift (2008), sustains that cultural geography of place is problematic since it politicizes human existence. For Thrift (2008), the analysis of place as given, leaves out the vagueness, non-intentional, non-discursive nature of the everyday practices. Future directions for the study of place and space have sought to engage with a non-representational geography (Thrift, 2008). He argues that representationalism in geography is not adequate to answer the question of place as all forms of representations fail to capture the liveliness of place. The study of place must focus not on what it is produced but on what is happening before it, while people are performing emplacements. Thrift (2008), addresses place as the analysis of embodied and performative experiences and practices of humans from the point of view of the precognitive, reflexive, ongoing action and movements, procedures, thoughts, sensorial, tactile, accidental and formless place-making. In this research, the focus of analysis is on

non-representationalism of practices of food and cuisine. Through these practices, new meanings of place and space are explored through multisensorial engagements in different public and domestic spaces for the production of 'home'.

3.6 Summary

Along with the definitions of 'sense of place', which have highlighted the multifaceted nature of place, the literature has discussed place-making as an embodied process which helps in considering place as a social product. This also brings to light to the fact that migrants invest in resources depending on availability. The body of the migrant is the site of will which manifests in creativity and the production of new meanings for its existence. However, feminists like Yuval-Davis (1997), Spivak (1988) and Ahmed (1999), are cautious about the Neoliberal individual school of phenomenology. The Western subject, who has freedom to move and speak, is not representative of all migrants; and especially those enforced to move from their countries like refugees or exiled migrants. This has implications for arguing about diasporic place-making. The literature has, also, covered the idea of the city as home. In particular, these sections aimed to show space and place as two categories of analysis of place-making. Place-making is important as it develops the basis for the women of this study to set their own definition of home. Finally, it discussed scholars of globalisation who propose the idea of home and belonging as global. Having explored place, the following Chapter 4, Foodways, will discuss the link between food and place in migration, particularly place as home through the homemaking of food and material practices.

Chapter 4

Foodways: the history, the field, the daily life

4.1 Introduction to chapter

Food strengthens the relationship that people have with place and defines their belonging, even beyond their ethnicity and culture (Marte, 2007, 2012; Longhurst et al., 2009). Due to the non yet formalized discipline of food, food results in a versatile object of study considered in many disciplinary areas. However, this thesis delves into the idea of foodways developed by anthropologists, as well as the more recent use of food in understanding human geography. This chapter, first, introduces the reader to the meanings of foodways, a 'popular term' that originated in America but which sounds unfamiliar to most European academics. Second, it briefly reviews its history and highlights the origins of the term to show how it connects to everyday human practices. It, also, argues that the study of foodways coincides with the start of civilities and explains how research practice has started in this area. Third, it outlines the current status of food research in Europe and overseas. Fourth, since the link between place and food is not yet explicit, it unravels the meanings of home through homemaking food practices, drawing on examples from the literature of foodways and place. Last, an overview of the position of South-East Asian women in the literature of foodways concludes this chapter.

4.2 Foodways: definitions

Since food has a crucial role in the way our societies are composed and shaped, a growing number of scholars from multidisciplinary areas have based their critical analysis on the relationships between food, culture and society (Kuper, 1977). Food studies encompass a wide range of disciplines, including social sciences, the humanities and science. Foodways, are not the study of food itself but in relation to human experience. Indeed, they differ from disciplinary areas such as agricultural studies, nutrition, the culinary arts and gastronomy, which are traditionally more focused on food properties. Foodways appear to belong originally to the American and North American traditions⁵ of food

⁵ They are two different scholarships in the US, and the American tradition includes the South American school of food studies.

studies. Specifically, foodways are traditionally related to disciplines such as anthropology, history, sociology and folklore. Food scholars share consent about a broad definitional form of foodways, whilst they are still engaging with appropriate use of the term and research practices. This is one among other reasons why in Europe, foodways are more cautiously tackled and usually defined within one or more particular disciplinary backgrounds. Here below, some major definitions of foodways from American scholarship are outlined, as well as their relevance to some of them for this thesis.

Foodways are a typical approach to understanding the construction of ethnic groups in the US (Avakian and Harper, 2005). One of the broadest definitions comes from anthropologists Brown and Mussell (1984), who edited a collection of essays which reunite the work of ethnic regional foodways and define those as ethnic group practices relating to the cultural, social and economic strands of food consumption, production and preparation. The scholars see foodways as particular local and regional food habits and traditions, reflecting social group's self-definitions and establishing meanings of belonging. Another definition of foodways comes from Counihan (1999), who offers a psychological contribution in the anthropological discourse of foodways. She argues that foodways serve to fulfill basic physical needs and evoke important physiological associations, such as an individual's senses, emotions and memories. Definitions of foodways span into folklore with Rahn (2006), and Steel and Zinn, (2016) who consider foodways as cultural artifacts. Rahn (2006), includes culinary preparation techniques and tools, rituals, festivals, and traditions. Ethnographers such as Edge et al. (2013), describe foodways as cultural exchanges and social interactions around food, drink and nutrition. Furthermore, anthropologists and social theorists have found further explanations of foodways, such as how people eat (and) what they eat (Sutton, 2010), why they eat what they eat (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002), the stratification and structures of societies through eating (Strauss, 1964; Douglas, 1966; Counihan and Kaplan, 1998) and where they eat (Longhurst et al., 2009). Other scholars seek for different definitions, such as who cooks food (Curtin and Heldke, 1992; Harris et al., 2005), rituals created around food (Jones, 2002; Harris et al., 2005), and the use of specific cultural tools (Harris et al., 2005) from which people learn cooking (Magalhães et al., 2014). Further definitions include, food events (Edgerton, 1993), commensality (Fisher et al., 2017), who is gathering while eating

(Brown and Mussell, 1984), what people feel, think and talk about when they eat (Counihan and Kaplan, 1998), what they remember about the dishes they eat (Seremetakis, 1994; Sutton, 2001; Holtzman, 2006) and why they care about food (Lee S. P., 2015), and finally curing and other food processes (Edge, 1987). Food here intersects culture, tradition and history. Most importantly, foodways are not only the study of the 'what' concerning the food, but a typical approach to understand the construction of societies and ethnic groups (Avakian and Harper, 2005; Parasecoli, 2014). In this respect, they are useful methodological tools to look at how culture changes via food (Appadurai, 1988; Edge et al. 2013), and most recently how people create place and home (Law, 2001; Marte, 2007, 2012; Longhurst et al., 2009). Additionally, foodways include practices like shopping (also as procurement of food) and consumerism in modern societies (Bell and Valentine, 1997), cookbooks and other forms of transmission of recipes (Curtin and Heldke, 1992; Choo, 2004), gardening (Kalcic, 1994; Cresswell, 2004; Perkins, 2009; Pink 2012; Counihan, 2015) and harvesting (Sutton, 2001), food exchange (March, 1998), trading foods (De Cassia Vieira Cardoso, et al., 2014; Magalhães, and Amparo da Silva Santos, 2014; Lee, 2015) and even breast-feeding (Counihan, 2015). Wilk (2006), distinguishes a public and a private aspect of food. He defines foodways as public, whilst cooking as private, whilst Sobal, Khan and Bisogni (1998), focus on foodwork, or food as labour, including production, planning, budgeting, procurement, preparation, cooking, consumption, digestion and cleaning up and waste.

The definitions here presented offer interesting perspectives regarding foodways. However, this thesis draws on Brown and Mussel's (1984) anthropological standpoint and expands the discourse on foodways through the psychological definition given by Counihan (1999). Brown and Mussel (1984) explore foodways as material practices, which transform the cultural asset of a society. In this respect, this thesis considers the discourse of foodways as performances which are settled in the materiality of daily life, whilst going beyond the material to the evocative, affective and imaginary (Jones, 2002). However, this thesis does not intend foodways to be specifically markers of ethnic groups and practices, as sub-titled in the book *'Ethnography of everyday life. The performance of group identity'* (Brown and Mussel, 1984). Instead, it looks at foodways as practices and performances which strength the relation which people have with place beyond their

ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, sensorial experiences, memories and knowledge, also, have food consumption, production and preparation at their core. Counihan (1999), recalls the multivocal functions of food. Rather than limiting the discourse of food to ethnic identity, she highlights different psychological as well as physiological processes, such as remembering, feeling, and sensing, which disclose the sensorial and embodied nature of foodways. This makes her definition of foodways suitable for this thesis, as it assumes the evocative essence of foodways in place-making and the corporeal and sensorial nature of emplacement.

In contrast to the anthropological tradition, the journal *Food and Foodways* by Taylor and Francis presents foodways in a cross-cultural multidisciplinary perspective. The term foodways is defined as the 'history and culture of human nourishment and its procurement'. Since food covers every aspect of life, such as social, economical, political, mental, nutritional and moral, the two editors sustain that it cannot be approached by any single discipline, but rather look at its intersectionality. Social and cultural psychology look at foodways as food-related patterns that distinguish a certain population (Bell and Valentine, 1997). Particularly, in popular culture foodways are looked at as contemporaneous food practices in a consumer society, which include nutritional and culinary aspects of food.

From the definitions aforementioned it appears ambiguous whether scholars regard food as a field of study or a method. It is highly probable that they do both, as the boundaries are not neat and clear. Anthropologists as well as historians have valued foodways as artifact (Steel and Zinn, 2016) or recounted the chronicles of the development of certain societies around some special ingredients (Mintz, 1985). For instance, in Mintz (1985), sugar is seen as structuring power relations in food-centred societies. He uses food as lens to shed light on the social structure of modern societies.

However, scholars are also engaging with food as a tool of research for looking into human life in disciplines like ethnographies (Marte, 2007; Pink, 2008), cultural studies (Appadurai, 1988) and sensory studies (Law, 2001). Yet, scholars who utilize cookbooks as documents to trace the structure of a society or a group treat these as archeological relics (Appadurai, 1988). As the journalist Levy noted:

Food studies is a subject so much in its infancy that it would be foolish to try to define it or in any way circumscribe it, because the topic, discipline or method you rule out today might be tomorrow's big thing (Food and beverage, 2017).

Indeed, this is an emergent field whereas academics and popular works are equally contributing to the rise of foodways status (Edge et al., 2013). Rahn (2015: 374), argues '*We are what we eat, so what are we?*'. The answer cannot simply come by considering only what we eat. Where we are located, the mobility of people's lives (Massey, 1994), these factors also impact on the individual's identification and emplacement through their food choices. Qualitative multidisciplinary applications of foodways and theories encompassing cultural and social psychology, human geography and ethnography, have much to contribute to the discussion around food, place-making and migration. This aspect is often missing from the literature (Longhurst et al., 2010).

This section has looked at the multidisciplinary definitions of foodways, and chosen the most relevant for this thesis. It has, also, illustrated how foodways connect many areas of life, which is an additional reason why this research is interdisciplinary. Since the idea of foodways is unusual in the European literature, the following section presents its history.

4.3 The history of foodways

The study of foodways was formally started by folklorists and anthropologists between the 1920s and the 1940s. The origins of food studies are related to the Great Depression. The first American use of the word revealed in a document is in the early 30s', and edited by folklorists who were engaged by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a civil campaign. This promoted and reinforced a collective memory and spirit of American traditions and living ways through work songs, superstitions, street vendors, festivals, tales and foodways. Furthermore, the government launched health programs in order to promote healthy diets. However, these programs were failing a great deal. As such, anthropological research sought to understand the reason why some poor food habits were persisting among some poorer groups. A team of anthropologists leaded by Bennet (Bennet et al., 1942), undertook a study in a Southern area of America around the Mississippi, in Illinois, to investigate the 'food habits' of the Original American, German

and Negro groups. Surprisingly, they found that these populations rejected fish, considered by medical and nutritional bulletins as a healthy food and an easily available resource in their habitat. They, thus, concluded that 'food habits' were rather culturally sanctioned than being grounded in an economic background or in the availability of food in nature. This was the reason why by changing the 'food habits' of groups and populations the culture could have been destabilized. Foodways became a fair substitute when talking about the ways a group eats. The term foodways derived from folk ways, a word that represented the cultural strands of ethnic populations.

However, food as a cultural object was already named in the pioneering works of anthropologists like Evans Pritchard (1940), the father of social anthropology, in the 30s'. He looked at the livelihood of Nuer, a pastoral tribe in Sudan, who depended upon the preparation and cooking of milk and many milk-based staple foods, among them millet porridge, for their subsistence. He concluded that food was a crucial element of subsistence, cultural development, political organization and the economy of a group. Furthermore, historical studies of pre-modern societies recount something that was already clear for ancient populations, like the Maya, where their whole civilization was rotated around food. In *Pre-Columbian Foodways*, Beliaev et al. (2010) recount how many Maya's painted ceramics featured inscriptions which once deciphered surprisingly revealed a list of ingredients, including cacao and Atole (gruel maize⁶), and were considered as a book of recipes of the ancient Mayas. What is most striking is that the term foodways was used only after that the study of food had begun. As Sutton (2010: 210) suggests:

...food and the senses were long confined to a sort of limbo whereby many anthropologists may have had the intuition that they were important but, for various reasons, did not have the language to address them either as topics of ethnographic analysis or of theoretical development.

Foodways, disappeared for two decades until the 1950s, when folklorists and anthropologists such as Anderson (2005), Kaplan, Hoover and Moore (1986), used the word to avoid any ethnocentric default when comparing cultural groups. Foodways were

⁶A type of cereal.

seen as a feature belonging to every culture. However, anthropologists such as Mintz (2002) and Anderson (2005) did not adopt the term foodways, but phrased it as 'food anthropology' when referring to food in their work. Between 1950 and 1970, the term was appointed as material culture and gained scarce academic interest.

The 80s' were a crucial point for food studies as historian Kaplan (1976) studied bread and politics in France, establishing the study of food and foodways from which the review journal '*Food and Foodways. Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment*' takes its name. These historical studies rediscovered an interest in food, underlining the link that the history of food has with the present time, and the importance of food in uncovering it. Similarly, the term 'foodways' was acknowledged by another historian such as Hackett Fisher (1989) in the '*Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*'. He distinguished and disambiguated folkways as cultural artifacts enforced by cultural elites, from foodways as a rather collective first-hand and non-political organization. Moreover, research in the 80s' revolved around the study of foodways of emigrated people from Southeast Asia and Central America.

In 1969, the Smithsonian Institution's annual Festival of American Folklife presented its programs about states or regions, and ethnic communities in which foodways appeared as shared community values. Interestingly, it is in these folkloric festivals that practices of foodways research found their foundation. In one of these festivals where traditional cooks were attending meal preparations, the folklorists started to interview them, thus enhancing innovative practices of observation and informal apprenticeship.

The studies of foodways developed in the early twenty-first century when many scholars focused on the study of cultural exchange within food events and other socially significant occasions. However, they focused chiefly on the locals, whilst less importance was given to the food practices of diasporas (Avakian and Haper, 2005).

This section has explained the history of the rise of foodways as a field of study and a tool of research. The importance of foodways for this thesis is also evident in what foodways have to do with material culture, which is one reason why the study of foodways has been dismissed in academic scholarship. This thesis endorses this link and looks at the material and 'folkloristic' side of foodways, aside its affective and psychological functions.

It necessarily seeks to promote more studies in that direction. The following section focuses on the current disciplinary status of foodways.

4.4 The disciplinary status of foodways

Today, foodways is not an autonomous field of study. In America, many conferences on foodways have been sponsored by the Association for the study of food and society (ASFS) and the New School for Social Research. The 77th Annual Asian in America Conference in 2001, with the theme '*Plates of Pleasure: The philosophy and politics of Southeast Asian food*', signaled the start of an inclusion of the popular 'industry' of food in the academia. During this conference, restaurateurs and chefs prepared and catered for Southeast Asian meals for the participants. The studies of foodways that before focused only on local white populations, started to become a method for tracking Diasporas and migration. This also coincided with the raising of interest and studies of material culture. The sources about food studies are enormous. Significant are the journals, *Food and Foodways* (1985) and *Gastronomica* (2000). However, American scholars have encountered difficulties in the affirmation of methodological practice of food for studying societies. One of the most consolidated schools of food is the Mississippi School and the Southern school of food⁷. Edge et al. (2013), currently work to affirm a *Southern foodways discipline* based on the best methodological practice in food studies. Moreover, the fact that food studies have started to focus more on cultural minorities and migrants says clearly that food provided a research tool to tackle these groups, and even voice their existence. In Oceania, food studies have had great success, whilst being incorporated in schools of tourism and travel, business and management, culinary arts and studies on the culture of food. In Europe, there is not a scientific committee which has established a widely-accepted systematization of foodways as a formal discipline, yet. The work found in the European literature of food sees scholarship phrasing foodways very cautiously or using alternative expressions like food habits (Rabikowska, 2010), commensality (Walker, 2012; Kerner et al., 2015; Fisher et al., 2017) and foodstuff (Walker, 2012), to name a few. This may be the consequence of the difficulties for Europeans in recognizing the enormous contribution of migrant's cuisines in Western

⁷ See <https://www.southernfoodways.org/about-us/>.

societies, also considering that European societies have become multiethnic relatively recently.

However, a number of food study programmes have flourished in universities across Europe in the last decades, also influenced by the American tradition. One of the most recent chairs in food studies was received by Professor Makela at the University of Finland in 2011. Renowned are the league of food in Denmark⁸, the Netherlands⁹, Italy (ASFS)¹⁰, and the SOAS¹¹ schools in the UK. Critics are beginning to appreciate and theorize the significance which food has in texts, and Eagleton (1998: 203) has talked about food as the 'edible ecriture'. Food writers, journalists, and chefs have written on the culinary aspects of food (Mannell, 1996; Luard, 2010; Dunlop, 2012), and the history of food (Hartley, 1954; Driver, 1983; De Vooght, 2011). However, in this respect foodways are still a field in formation.

Sutton (2010), argues that although foodways did not require him to give any further explanation in ten years of teaching students a food course, the status of the discipline is precarious and contested in Europe for different reasons. One is the multidisciplinary nature of food or the fact that food is transversal to many disciplines (Counihan and Esterik, 2013). Some scholars believe that by establishing a disciplinary status of food, it would fail foodways as a binocular lens to study group dynamics. Indeed, many uncontrolled dynamics would fall off the range of attention of the researcher within a tighter fieldwork and analysis. Two, food and cooking are often and mistakenly seen as being too mundane (Christie, 2006; Albala, 2013). Three, especially in Europe, migration and diasporas are more recent if compared to North and South America (Cologna, 2002). Similarly, the formation of the nation-states in Europe has ousted and ignored for long time migration and how minorities have influenced the local culture.

Möhring (2008), studied the 'Ausländische Gastronomie'¹² in the post-WWII period. His research is a meaningful example to understand how foodways of migrant groups in Germany have enhanced an interest in food as a discipline. Möhring (2008), argues that

⁸ See FOST <http://research.vub.ac.be/food-history/fost>.

⁹ See <http://www.eurmscfood.nl/default.asp?nid=10&mid=&pid=56>.

¹⁰ See <http://www.umbra.org/academics/food-studies/>.

¹¹ SOAS <http://www.soas.ac.uk/foodstudies/>.

¹² It translates 'foreign cuisine' and refers to the German cuisine.

German cuisine did not have a proper name and recognition until migration had started to transform the composition of the society in Germany. From the 1950's to the 1980's, the restaurants called 'Ausländisches Spezialitäten'¹³ or restaurants selling foreign specialties which were used in the local cuisine, left German cuisine culturally unmarked. The consumption of ethnic ingredients revolutionized the German gourmet and popular cuisines. Indeed, after the war either public chefs or the locals replaced foreign ingredients, which were too expensive or that Germans considered too 'exotic', with more familiar ones. Post-war dishes entered the national books of cuisine as being more palatable and acceptable to the German population. The first Chinese dish dates back to 1953 and was 'Nasi-Goreng' or 'pork sweet and sour', and it was a hybrid between the German and Chinese 'territorialities'. Conversely, US social configuration and traditions are originally shaped by ethnic foods. Food studies were actually enhanced in order to notify and formally give recognition to the idea that in such a big land different ethnic groups coexisted, mixed and encountered and fought at the table. Indeed, the limit of food literature in Europe is the scarce attention brought to the food of migrants. This is particularly true for Asian diasporas. The existent research and manuscripts on this literature provide evidence that the interest in food and migrants has progressively diminished with time, since references are very old. Food migration has been mainly tackled by sociologists, anthropologists and ethnologists (Nyman and Gallardo, 2007). Furthermore, in migration studies foodways are considered a secondary aspect and they remain the last concern of political agendas (Peckham, 1998). It is clear that the scarcity of these materials demand interrogation.

This section has compared the status of the discipline between the US and Europe, where the tradition of food studies is currently beginning. Moreover, it has suggested that the scarce interest of the literature in everyday food practices is indeed what this thesis seeks to explore. The following section focuses on ethnographic work regarding the link between food, migration and home, from the literature of food and place. Foodways are here discussed as place-making.

¹³ It translates German delicatessen.

4.5 Homemaking food practices: defining the home

This section discusses diverse meanings of home throughout the literature of food and place in anthropological, historical and human geographical works. The first idea, is that home is a creative space, which is not congruent with the definition of home as the repetition and reconstruction of the culture by the traditional approaches to migration. Second, is the home as a multilocal concept. Third, is the argument against the home as a private versus public space. Fourth, is the representation of gender in the literature of foodways in relation to public and household spaces of food. Last, is the home as a simultaneous construction and a knotted memorial emplacement (Stevenson, 2016).

Food is a viable way for migrants to fashion place abroad. Caldwell (2006), and Turgeon and Pastinelli (2002), call cooking and other food practices a geogastronomia, since these practices are an embodied and sensual construction of place and the reconstitution of home (Plaza, 2014). Indeed, culinary tastes establish an individual's belonging and home (Caldwell, 2006) no less than political borders, languages, and history. Home in this context refers to a place where individuals would feel secure and preserve comforting memories that shall endure settlement. Food and place seems to move on a binary logic: for individuals to feel a sense of place, they must find and eat their 'own' food, in addition to the original experiences of food from home first (Plaza, 2014). Food scholars raise, then, the question of how in multicultural societies people construct liveable places for ethnicities, and how migrants can feel accepted as citizens in the receiving societies. Some work investigates how people create home physically, sensorially, imaginatively and creatively through food and how these performances change geographies. The link between place and food is explored by looking at whether people belong in other ways beyond their ethnicities. For instance, Stevenson (2016), explores the link between home and food through the arrival stories of international students in Manchester. He finds that one way in which the students render Manchester a more familiar place to them is visiting food sites like a fruit market, a Greek restaurant, and a donut shop in the city. These places evoke tasting memories of their former homes, and in turn develop their sense of belonging to the city. The students change the geographic representations of Manchester: from a distant point on the world map (the countries where they come from), to Manchester illustrated through first-hand walking maps and sensorial postcards.

This section discusses the ideas of home with ethnographic examples drawn from the literature of foodways and, also, by looking at the work produced by human geographers interested in food.

First, the old school of migration based their analysis of cultural groups on the model of assimilation and acculturation (O'Reilly, 2015) and transplantation (Chen, Y.J. 2013; Piltcher, 2013), when migrants were thought to bring their own cultures with them when migrating. Figuratively, home was seen as the reconstruction of old habits and traditions from the homeland, which was looked on as hostile by the host society. Home was a contested space between segregation and marginalization of groups and boundary fixity on the one hand, or the abandonment of the original culture with the investment in the new customs on the other. However, foodways has proved a novel theory and method for looking at migration and home-making, revealing that migrants do not need to renounce their cultures to 'fit in' (Hall,1990). Reterritorialization, consisting in the process of re-construction of the culture in new time-space contexts (Sidney and Tan, 2007), is a good way to explain the production of home abroad in a new fashion, rather than the old idea of transplanting home abroad. Home is the result of the creativity and compliance of these groups in maintaining, combining and negotiating aspects of their culture, sometimes with the complicity of the host society (Bahabha, 1994; Cohen, 1990).

Kalcic (1984), in a study of the most recent immigration of Vietnamese in the USA recounts how Vietnamese open their restaurants, stores and also create gardens to feel a sense of comfort and ease the shock of entering the new culture. Spaces like gardens in the backyards of their houses, in particular, represent niches of culture. They are nostalgic corners of the motherland, shaped through the earthy activities of the Vietnamese, who seek a contact with the soil which they have left behind. Vietnamese are used to growing vegetables and herbs in their country, which are unavailable abroad. Later they get used to cooking their food and new localized dishes.

Another example is restaurants. They are the centre of life of trading diasporic communities, such as the Chinese in the US (Lee, 2015), or other diasporas of Chinese in Southeast Asia, such as the Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore (Tan, 2007). These groups have progressively and ingeniously learned how to reinvent their menus to reduce the gap between a public and local cuisine and created an 'original' domestic cuisine. Indeed,

these processes are quite a reversal. By virtue of these creolized recipes many Asian foods are now familiar to the Americans, and the new generations of South and East Asian-American (Lee, 2015). Furthermore, Chinese-Malaysian and Chinese-Singaporean dishes are served in high level restaurants of Southeast Asia, thus rendering these countries a palatable destination for the Chinese from the homeland. Another example comes from the Chinese diasporic groups from Funjien and Guandong provinces, who brought with them cooking styles and indigenous ingredients to South Asia, North America, and Oceania, and creolised local cuisines and traditions. For instance, Taro roots in New Guinea became a local ceremonial food (Sidney and Tan, 2007).

Second, food is also important in respect to the geographies of home that people construct. Home is never 'here' or 'there', but a space which eludes geographical conventions and it is far more capillary and fluid under the notion of place-making. The diasporas of the Caribbean in the UK, US, and Canada, has left behind the creation of familiar social spaces, such as groceries, fast-food and high cuisine restaurants, clothing stores, hair styling salons, music shops, and not least roti and doubles¹⁴ shops, all decorated with motifs and style traditionally considered as Caribbean. Plaza, (2014) argues that especially the last ones are 'third spaces', or locations that bridge migrants to the original 'home' while abroad. These spaces have the potential of letting migrants feel as if they are being 'here' and 'there' simultaneously, while creating a dimension which reduces the conflict between the two geographical homes.

Pilcher (2013), after comparing a series of photos which portray taco trucks¹⁵ in Manhattan and 'Walmart¹⁶ de Mexico' asks '*Which is Mexico?*'. He argues that while Mexicans have cooked and eaten their street food in the US, and people back in Mexico are shopping in one of the biggest American shopping chains, home is never a clear and incontestable geographical entity. Indeed, the global circuits of the marketplace have

¹⁴ Roti and doubles are cultural foods eaten by Trinidadians, the inhabitants of Trinidad islands in the Caribbean. They are, also, consumed in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Roti, is a flat whole meal flour Indian bread made from stone ground and originated in South Asia. Doubles, is a common street food in Trinidad and Tobago. It is a sandwich made with two bara (flat fried bread), and filled with curry chickpeas.

¹⁵ Street trucks selling Mexicano taco, a traditional folded or rolled wheat tortillas with filling such as beef, pork, chicken, vegetables or seafood, and cheese and a chili or other sauces.

¹⁶ The American multinational retailing corporation operating as a chain of supermarkets, discount department stores, and grocery stores all over the world.

expanded the ideas of roots of individuals as their home could be found everywhere. As regards to the concept of the home as non-localized rooting process, Cohen (2015), sustains the etymological familiarity of the term diasporas with the botanic lexicon. Diasporic groups are compared to the seeds of a plant, scattered, dispersed, and uprooted units in search of roots. However, in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatic thought the home '*...has a nomadic character, growing from near random wanderings, rather than from a single rootstock*', as recounted in Cohen (2015: 5).

Marte (2012, 2017), recognizes that Dominico-Mexicans in New York City construct their sense of home through a combination of national dishes. While studying migrants' foodways, or observing, smelling, tasting and listening to the Mexicans preparing food, migrants recall pathways related to the places they navigated in search of ingredients, their memories connected to these dishes and the people who taught them these recipes. Thus, she realizes that the history of the Mexican dish has a much longer history which re-inscribe migrant's belonging. Even the recipe of the dish is a unique and personal version of multiple geographies of home.

Third, a distorted image of home as only a private and domestic space. Indeed, this idea has been largely contested, but still appears to be relevant when looking at works in the literature of foodways. Home is often associated with the kitchen space. Longhurst et al. (2010) interviewing migrant women in Hamilton while cooking their staple dishes in their home kitchen find that these women relieve homesickness through food. The whole discussion is anyway pointing at the fact that home is a safe shelter for them, whereas public spaces fail in implementing policies and sharing information and services which could help the women to feel welcome in the receiving country. Less regard has been reserved in the literature to how women have realized their own dishes through an exploration of their activities outside the home. Unfortunately, this reaffirms the old idea of the kitchen space as the microcosm of women's life. Indeed, kitchens can be creative laboratories for women, and especially for migrant women abroad; they constitute a way for their empowerment. However, the home can be either the streets where migrants walk while eating, the stores where they sell or purchase their 'stuffs', or the work place where they spend the most time of their lives. This does not diminish the idea of kitchens

as important spaces where social activities and life take place, but the home is interlaced and communicates with the outside spaces, by virtue of individuals' embodied practices.

Fourth, the literature of foodways should tackle gender and look at how women circulate and compose public spaces, as well as how men participate in the construction of home in the households. Thus, for example, most of the work conducted about food and the kitchen shows either women cooking in the home, and anyway relates their cooking and eating practices to mundane and unpaid labour (Curtin, 1994). Contrary, literature is quite limited regarding the place of men in domestic spaces, but they appear mostly as producers in the area of food markets, whereas the women are contrary less represented (Pang, 1998). In relation to the Chinese diasporas these works are mainly concerned with restaurants and takeaways or other sorts of entrepreneurship, and are mostly represented by the men (Chen Y.J., 2013). Chen Y. J. (2013), argues that Chinese women from 1999 appeared through American cookbooks because they were not allowed to go to a restaurant. Furthermore, while the literary contributions of the Chinese in Europe are mainly studied at macro and meso levels¹⁷, the ordinary micro-experiences of those involved actors are underrepresented, marginalized and/or at least generalized. However, in both public and private, women are the workforce in public entrepreneurship.

An example of how domestic spaces marginalize the men in the role of chefs, and how cooking contributes in creating forms of belonging and participation in the production of the household for men, are the memories of a journey of a Senegalese man in New York. The Senegalese man recounts how cooking changed his story of migration (Bishop Highfield, 2017). The Senegalese man argues how in Senegal men were banned from the kitchen and from restaurants, making the kitchen a feminized space. Coming to New York, where he found an occupation as a chef, food not only food became a way of expressing himself and creating a sense of home through cooking Senegalese, but cooking meant for him revenging a space from where he was banned in his country. Having the chance to cook Senegalese meant for him feeling accepted and at home in the new society, whereas through cooking he could also display his own picture of Senegal for the costumers.

An example of the contested role of women in public spaces is given by the Mexican fiestas, a public space where women are often represented. These spaces between

¹⁷International (macro) and national (meso) economic trade and circuits of entrepreneurship.

private and public are quite ambiguous. On the one hand, they celebrate the community life, whilst on the other they open and welcome everyone to eat special and traditional foods. Food and cooking cement and forge community linkages and identity and group relationships, reinforce roots and emplacement of cultural groups and a sense of shared history. Christie (2006), describes Mexican fiestas as part of everyday life for the population in rural Mexico. Here, meanings of belonging are extended through the preparation of a special dish, the mole, a turkey served with a thick and rich sauce. Through tasting the mole, the rural population reinforces their commitment and forges intergenerational ties. The mass cooking of mole attracts the young generations who join the old 'comares' (wives) in an intensive cooking labour, and also people from Mexico City who come to eat the mole. Food and food labour becomes a vector for the unification of different Mexicans groups reconciled while eating the same dish. A sense of home is socially constructed through the women's cuisine. Cooking seems to be not just a form of social glue for Mexicans. The fiesta involves some alcohol and men getting drunk; without the food they could not stand to drink the alcohol (i.e. which makes them feels uprooted and disoriented). Food is also important to cement roots and remember the history of an immigrant population (Weismantel, 1998; Parasecoli, 2014). Discussing foodways in the context of migration for social psychologists remains an unexplored field. More research is needed in this direction.

Fifth, home is remembered, imagined and evoked through the feeling of nostalgia for some foods (Sutton, 2014). This literature argues the past as a crucial element of diasporas and migration in order to re-establish roots and recreate home abroad. This is, indeed, true as through the repetition of food practices and recipes the women of Gaza reconstruct Palestine before the siege, when they were free to move and access spaces in their city, or to grow their food in these spaces (El-Haddad and Schmitt, 2013). Ben-ze'ev (2004) argues that the Palestinians who live in Jewish cities perform ceremonial rituals among which includes fetching herbs, greens, fruit from local wild plants and trees planted before the 1948¹⁸ in remote villages of their homeland. By cooking, preserving and sharing them with friends and family back at home they feel the comfort of a Palestinian home. Sutton (2014), describes the life of the Aegean inhabitants of an island

¹⁸The official date when Palestina was declared Jewish's land.

in Greece, who engage in domestic routines like harvesting and cooking. These routines, related to the seasonal cycle of nature, transmit to the new generations a sense of an unchangeable home and belonging through recipes, practices and tastes. However, these intergenerational circuits of transmission of knowledge are not endurable when globalisation reaches out to remote places and new generations. While these examples emphasize the role of tradition (i.e. representing the past) in the construction of home, less clearly articulated is instead the link that researches make between tradition and the present. Parasecoli (2014), sustains that tradition is not just a remembrance and a repetition of the past. Rather, he sees tradition as a performance in the present with the resources that individuals find available, and as such it is enacted and re-invented in a new context. These practices, also, open to fresh meanings of home for the second generations who repeat or either abandon them according to the 'original' and local customs.

This section has explained the most relevant meanings of home given in the literature of foodways and place, which are also pertinent for this thesis. This research focuses on homemaking food practices in order to explore the meanings of home. The following section, focuses on the status of the literature of foodways in South-East Asian diasporas to shed light on the relationship between food, place, migration and women.

4.6 The status of the literature of foodways in the South-East Asian diasporas

A review of the literature of foodways and transnational Asian diasporas has highlighted a gender gap in food studies (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002) and a gender neutral description of diasporas and food (Thomas M., 2004). The sources on Asian women and food preparation are only limited (Sidney and Tan, 2007; Choo, 2004). However, a few biographical novels have been written by Chinese women about their difficulties in resettling in the UK or US through their food businesses (Chu, 1961; Tse, 2007; Hsiao, 2014)¹⁹. Other works are recipe books launched by Chinese women chefs (Tse, 2007). Cookbooks have been methodologically and theoretically central to feminist food studies. Engelhardt et al. (2013) believe that recipes, regional ingredients, and cooking practices

¹⁹ See Manchester city Council archives http://www.manchester.gov.uk/directory_record/212555/chinese.

are informative as regards social history, gender migration, women's agency, home and place-making. Cookbooks are a method which shed light on women and home, where home and women have not been considered enough in the literature.

Although this thesis does not consider cookbooks, it includes recipes to explore the link between women and place-making in migration. It, also, makes tangible the social engagement and networks, family linkages and global connectivity in relation to home through these recipes. The silence on Asian women in food business might be due to the fact that research has focused on the roles of women when describing phenomena like food catering, where they were seen as employed as helpers and/or dependent. Indeed, many skilful and educated second generation Chinese women are nowadays (re)turning to restaurants and catering businesses despite the pressures of their parents to find a higher position (Tse, 2007). Furthermore, while the literature contains many examples of groups, who founded their migration based on food, it lacks representations of the household experiences. The fact that women were legally and financially dependant on their husband's visa, therefore they could not work, certainly influenced the confining of women's space in the home. The kitchen purposively remained a private and unknown space, whereas the migrant women have remained in the darkness.

Discussing foodways in the context of migration for social psychologists remains an unexplored field which adds richness. This research aims at describing these phenomena via food to explore novel knowledge and research practice in the field.

4.7 Summary

Foodways are a controversial area of study, as they are tackled differently in relation to various disciplines, and even geographically according to overseas and European traditions. This chapter has explained how this research means foodways in relation to place. It is important to clarify that due to the contested status of the discipline of food, as well as the difficulty of employing the term foodways in current research in Europe, this thesis has edited foodways to 'food practices', instead. Additionally, since foodways originally claims the definition of ethnic groups, this thesis intends to use food practices instead in order to move over to more diverse and complex representations of groups through food. However, this research seeks for a personal definition and interpretation of

foodways, which will be clarified in its full meaning in chapters 9 and 10. By focusing on migrant women's everyday food practices, this research intends to claim spaces for women and their food. These practices are considered as knowledge producing a novel representation of migrant women in the literature of migration and foodways. The following chapter turns to the literature of the senses.

Chapter 5

The cultural and methodological upraise of the senses

5.1 Introduction to chapter

Sensory studies is a 'cultural approach to the senses and a sensory approach to culture' (Howes, 2013: 1). Anthropologists, historians and sociologists first unraveled the '*social life of senses*' (Howes, 2013: 1) in the 1980's as an alternative viewpoint to the evolutionary theory embraced by mainstream psychology and the neuroscience.

The difficulties that scholars encountered in formalizing the study of the senses relates to prevailing ideas in Western philosophy and science regarding the senses (Classen, 1997). The next three sections illustrate three prevailing ideas from the history of the development of the senses in the West: a) an architecture of the senses; b) the 'precultural' nature of the senses; c) the textualization of culture in anthropological practice. In particular, the first section discusses an architecture of the senses, with vision and hearing as predominant registers, and the sequentialism of the senses. It, also, expands, through the study of non-Western civilizations, the cultural systematizations of the senses, and the link between those and social order. The second section, recounts the structural passage from 'premodern to modern' civilization with the urbanization and transformation of the Western city. The counter argument, by scholars of the senses, illustrates the social and collective foundation of perception rather than the 'precultural' nature of the senses. Senses studies developed a different understanding of the senses, their organization, and included a renewed epistemology of the body (Howes, 2013). The third paragraph discusses the prevailing idea of textualization of early anthropology and the methodological advancements in senses studies. It also disputes the senses as either objects of study and methods.

5.2 The cultural nature of the senses

A sensory and affective turn was affirmed in the 1990's in the humanities and social sciences, but the fundamentals of the discipline had been deposited half a century before. The historical development of the senses succeeded with advancements in the epistemologies of the body.

Before the 90's, the sciences tended to explain the senses as physiological predispositions for the human adaptation to the environment, working in sequential order for the recording and processing of information from the outside throughout the nerves and straight to the mind (see Spearman's, 1904; Cattell's 1963; and Galton's, 1889 models of intelligence). Neural explanations of the senses have spread into medical and educational fields, with the 'truth' of a hierarchical architecture of the five senses, among which sight was predominant, hearing came as second and smell, touch and taste were considered as 'lower' senses (Howes, 2013). Hierarchical categorizations, also, mirrored at social level gendered models of the senses (see Irigaray and Cixous in Korsmeyer, 2002) and racial categorizations (Smith, 2006). Oken (1847), in the early 19th century used the Western categorization of the five senses to represent a raced hierarchy of humans who inhabit the world, with the white European man in the centre. The taxonomy registered each race juxtaposed to a unique sensorium with Africans labeled as black skin-men at the bottom, following the brown Australian-Malayan as tongue-men, the red American nose-men, the yellow Asian-Mongolian ear-men and the white European eye-men at the top.

Conversely, scholars of the senses argue that the scientific explanations of the senses undermine the relevance of culture in human's sensorial responses. Furthermore, having found a strict interdependence between the social and sensory structures of reality (Howes, 2013), the scientific explanation of the senses failed other cosmologies modelled by non-Western societies on the basis of different physical and sensorial dominions. Anthropologists who conducted studies regarding the sensorium of cultures, confirmed how different cultural populations modelled different sense scales and alternative social worlds (Classen, 1993, 2012; Feld, 2012). Rather than natural (evolutionary) responses for human adaptation, the senses were studied as apprehending meanings and values in relation to the social order of any society (Classen, 1997). In *'Sound and Sentiment'* Feld (2012) studied the acoustics of the social life of the Kaluli tribe in the rainforest in New Guinea. He states that sound in Kaluli culture is like an interpreted 'aesthetic' response that evokes social emotions. Kaluli people are able to identify each bird by watching and listening to their sounds such as singing, weeping, and whistling. They believe that these birds even 'say their names' and 'talk Kaluli'. The great importance that bird sounds have for the tribe is related to the myth that these birds are spirits of their dead ancestors who

talk to them through this medium. These sounds are, thus, embedded in cultural and social practices of the Kaluli people, such as ordinary and celebratory functions. They create the articulated set of cultural values and emotions of Kaluli. Kaluli use the surrounding sounds of their homes to play their music. In doing so, their songs have two types of components. The first is the 'gisalo' or the natural sound of the bird that comes from nature or from the space around, which is reproduced by the human voice. The other is the textual element or the bird sound words, the 'sa-gisalo', derived from human intellectual faculties, which help in interpreting these sounds. However, the conversion of the sound into words is evoked through drama performances that involve the body undergoing metamorphosis. For instance, these songs are recited in a melancholic bird voice by dancers dressed as birds near a waterfall in order to move the audience to tears. This study shows that not only sound embodied in the living experiences of the tribe cause emotions like weeping, but it also gives a different meaning to the way the senses function in a non-Western culture.

Scholars have diverted their attention from ocular centrism, also, by writing about the history of 'exotic' ingredients and substances, such as salt (Kurlansky, 2003) or chocolate (Off, 2006) and many others, or studying single sensations (Dugan, 2011; Feld, 2012) to uncover the use of sensorium throughout time in Western societies (Hoffer, 2005). They intended to prove that perception is fashioned by culture, and that Western societies were not intellectually more advanced than others. In *'The Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch'*, Classen (2012) looks to 'lower' senses, specifically touch. Touch dominated the Middle Age, as touch could test and validate the impressions of sight and the other senses (Mandrour, 1976). In *'Aroma'* (Classen et al., 1994) she shows how the sensorial priorities of natural elements like the smell of roses, prized as a symbol of purity and sanctity or for flavoring the dishes, have been switched to visual appearance during the Enlightenment, as roses started to be cured and controlled for their colours and forms.

Moreover, Western societies emphasized the importance of one sense over another at different stages of their history and for socio-political and economic interests. *'Sweetness and Power'* (1985), is the story of how the (a single) taste of sugar has influenced the Western world. Mintz (1985), highlights the power which lies behind certain substances

like sugar, first considered as 'exotic' since consumed and/or produced in tribal non-Western groups, before their appropriation and conversion into Western commodities. He argues that behind everyday objects or foods there are always questions about power and status. Mintz, (1985, 1959: 71) recounts the Western story of extraction of sugar from the African plantations, its consumption at the bourgeois British tables, and its mass production with the rise of the international market. Furthermore, sugar (taste), as well as other substances and ingredients, have always influenced the movement of people all around the world from European expeditions in colonial times to the more modern forms of migration:

Because of it (sugar), literally millions of enslaved Africans reached the New World...This migration was followed by those of East Indians...Chinese, Portuguese, and many other peoples. ...Sugar brought a dozen different ethnic groups in staggering succession to Hawaii, and sugar still moves people about the Caribbean.

Gabbaccia (1998), describes the 'melting pot' American society during the 20th century as the result of creolising tastes and interethnic relationships of migrant communities and the expansion of the global market. For instance, the Chinese were consuming sweet potatoes and peanuts in the 19th century, incorporating them in their dishes and traditions. The social history of spices by Schivelbusch (1993), recounts the history about the addiction of the Occident to certain ingredients like cinnamon, tea, coffee and chocolate, but also substances like tobacco, alcohol and opium imported from the East of the world. Whilst Eastern and indigenous societies were always considered as inferior, the monopolisation of ingredients which Westerners obtained in their colonies, has contributed greatly to the expansion of the physical sensations and palates, as well as odors and textures, of Western societies and the creation of new habits and customs.

The cultural systematization of senses varies across cultures. There are Buddhists and Indians (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad), who recognize up to eight senses with the prevalence on prana, or a breathing organ (like nose and breath) which is used in meditative practices like yoga. It follows the speech organ; tongue (taste); eyes (color); ears (sounds); mana or thought as an inner organ; hands (work); skin (touch) (Elberfeld, 2003, p. 483). The Tzotzil of Mexico studied by Classen (1993), have words for different sensorial

experiences. This group believes in heat as the motor of the cosmos and understands and organizes their society on the basis of physical gradations of temperature by looking at the waxing and the waning of the sun. East and West are the hottest and coolest regions respectively. Men and women occupy these regions according to cultural associations which attribute men to the hot regions, whilst women and infants to the coolest.

Likewise, studies on the cultural systematization of the senses go further to include the study of the body. Theories span from Synnott (1993), who sees the body as a vehicle to express sociological functions such as touch, smell as well as sight, to Cage (Hermitary, 2000) as body respons-ability, or the ability of responding in a feelingful way to stimulus. Contrary to the idea of respons-ability by Cage (Hermitary, 2000), Ingold (2015) proposes the idea of 'correspondence' or 'attention' of bodies. He argues that body respons-ability suggests the existence of a distance between the registration of the stimulus and a response in terms of feelings. Instead, he argues that the body is in a constant correspondence with the world through its sensing activity. In other words, the body whilst listening or hearing is always feeling. Sensing the reality entails the individual constantly 'stretching out' to bring the movement of the 'others' (i.e. people and objects) in a correspondence with the self. Blackman (2012), extends the study of the body and the senses to include extrasensory phenomena such as telepathy, transfer, hearing voices, and placebo and other phenomena studied in the 19th century, that have now been replaced by neuro-scientific theories. However, her point is the permeability, intertwining and relational nature of the body with other bodies, technologies and culture. The bodies experience affection, which comes from intersensoriality and their capacity to '*..extend into our environments and yet paradoxically are required to live this extension as interiority*' (Blackman, 2012: 151).

The Western scientific dominion of the senses represses those experiences since they are out of the competence of a science of the visible, while the five senses schema is repeatedly disconfirmed by a series of 'imperceptible' (yet unnamed and unconscious) ordinary experiences. Other scholars go further to include kinesthesia (Classen 1993), synaesthesia (a form of intersensoriality) (Woods, 2011), thermoregulation and thermoception (Vannini and Taggard, 2013; Allen-Collinson and Owton, 2015), 'phantasia' or imagination (Boyle, 2009), proprioception or the awareness of body position,

movement and force of the movement, equilibrioception or the vestibular organ, and the vomeronasal organ which detects pheromones and it is distinguished from olfactory (Macpherson, 2010).

In Chinese culture, senses follow the traditional Taoist and Confucian Philosophies and cosmology which believe in Yin and Yang, two principles which harmonize life. Both Yin and Yang include sensual elements of human experience, material elements and ideas. Yin is told to be the feminine part '*..black, dark, North, water (transformation), passive, moon (weakness and the goddess Changxi), earth, cold, old, even numbers, valleys, poor, soft...*' which provides spirit to all things. Yang is the masculine, '*...white, light, South, fire (creativity), active, sun (strength and the god Xihe), heaven, warm, young, odd numbers, mountains, rich, hard...*' or the form of all things (Cartwright, 2012). The Chinese use of Yin and Yang permeates any aspect of Chinese society such as literature, politics, gender position of women and men in the society and family, eating and curing the body with traditional medicine, body exercise like martial arts and many others (Lee, 2000; Gao, 2017). It is striking that the concept of mind/body which permeates Western philosophy is dissolved in Chinese culture. Indeed, aspects of body, material and mind are presented as a whole. Similarly, this happens in Indi philosophy, where the mind is treated as an organ or a sense amongst the others.

Lévi-Strauss (1964), observed the complexity of thought of the Bororo Indians in South America through the use and meanings of primordial myths. Myths are pre-logical forms of knowledge, like magic, subjective experiences, and imagination, and as such are banned from a scientific viewpoint. However, he debates that myths are complex systems of categorization of reality and they are based on recurrent sensorial categories (e.g. raw/cooked/rotten food) and essential elements (e.g. water, fire). Contrary to the suprasensible logic of physics, Levi-Strauss (1964) argues that myths explain phenomena through the continuity between nature and culture, rather than their separation. Myths employ haptic, olfaction, hearing, gust and visual qualities of human sensitive experience. For instance, Levi-Strauss (1964) analyses the myth of cooking. This is about understanding how the raw techniques of food procurement have evolved in cooking as cultural and social processes, which is what distinguishes the humans from the animals

(i.e. culture from nature). He utilizes the image of a culinary triangle, where everything is interlinked and in communication rather than separated. The triangle illustrates the transformation of the raw into cooked, edible, and putrid food, respectively by grilled roasted, smoked and boiled procedures. These procedures denote that cultural and natural processes of food are implicated when cooking. Furthermore, interestingly, at each level of the culinary structure, like in myths, the sensorial is always involved.

This section has discussed how anthropologists oppose the architecture of the senses proposed by Western visual epistemology. The section has given a taste of the historical background of the study of the senses and argued the cultural nature in which they are embedded. The scholars of the senses rethink the structure of perception as entwined within culture, and emplaced within the position of the individual in culture. The type of social order organized by the sciences of the senses to represent the world is, in reality, constantly transgressed. Individuals and groups within Western and non-Western societies transform their ordinary experiences by adopting diverse personal and cultural sensorial systems.

The studies described were located in the natural environments of 'indigenous' civilizations. The following section continues with the second prevailing idea in Western culture, the 'precultural' nature of the senses, and the studies are 'housed' in the city.

5.3 Shifting approaches of sensory studies and place-making

The second bias is the idea of a 'precultural' nature of the senses. It refers to the presumptively advantage of vision adopted by Western societies. The great emphasis over sight, as the civilized sense, lead to the consideration of the other senses as 'lower' human responses according to Western thought. However, non-Western and indigenous societies, as illustrated in the anthropological research, rely on touch, gust, hearing and olfactory to experience and think about reality. For this reason these cultures are labeled as 'uncivilized' in opposition to the 'civilized' West. In modern times, this rupture between the 'two societies' is even emphasized by presenting the modern European city as the most advanced form of culture, against the rural and natural environments where the 'precultural' societies live.

It is not by coincidence that the sensory turn corresponds with the growth and urbanization of modern Western cities between the 19th and 20th centuries. Sociologists, anthropologists and geographers started to question the experiences of the city dwellers within the important transformations and expansion of the city landscape. The scholastic interest for the study of the senses and its disciplinary status could be technically thought of as having 'urban roots'. The dominant Western ideology politicizes the human sensorium to design the reality in which the individuals live. Thus, the modernization and expansion of the modern cities appears disconnected from the human body (Henshaw, 2014). Urban architects and city planners have initiated a mass construction of replica buildings in the peripheries of the cities, by dismantling green spaces and lively central areas. Their replacement with infrastructures has changed the sounds of the city with mechanical dull noises. Furthermore, the introduction of the radio, telephones and visual technologies has diffused new acoustics, while shielding individuals from other stimuli and social interchange (Classen, 2016). The city in Western history becomes the allegory of an intellectual superiority of the white culture, with its rational model of life and the engagement with audio-visual perceptual (Febvre, 1942). Here, smell, taste and touch, more expressed in non-Western societies, are considered as 'precultural' and inferior forms of knowledge at the bottom of the scale of senses.

Sociologists were among the first to point out the fallacy of vision over the other senses. They, also, argued about the emphasis given to the aesthetic model of the city (Howes, 2013). Simmel (1912), notes that with modernization there was a growing isolation of the city dwellers with the loss of aural and non-verbal communication. Contrary to small towns, whereas people experience more hearing and verbal exchanges, the city dwellers exchange eye-contacts in their ordinary casual encounters in unsettling spaces, like transport areas or non-places (Augè, 1995). In these places, they do not have to interact with each other. He, therefore, concludes that people in the city are reduced to visual impressions, whilst physical and verbal interactions would allow people to know beyond the extensible. In this respect, Simmel (1969) in *'Metropolis of mental life'* writes about a 'blasè outlook' to describe a sort of disinterested human sensibility due to the overstimulation of sight-hearing in the city with a withdrawal from the social life of the senses. Similarly, Sennett (1994) argues for the poverty of contacts which characterizes

life in the big cities, where people are strangers to each other. Elias (2000), who studied manners in European societies, describes the repression of physical impulses, referred to as grotesque and wild in the transition from the Middle Ages to Modernity. He observes the circumspect attitude of people in touching their food following the introduction of utensils, and becoming rather uncomfortable with the public displaying touching themselves and others. McLuhan (1962), distinguishes four stages of human evolution: the oral stage, which is the principal medium of information in 'tribal' societies, a chirographic or writing stage, a typographic stage with the invention of the press, and ultimately the electronic stage with the introduction of the internet in post-modern societies. McLuhan (1962), argues that the oral stage, typical of non-electronic societies, is the start of the history of human evolution. Here, the predominance of the ear does not make these societies less sophisticated than the electronic societies. For McLuhan (1962) hearing combines the whole senses when individuals are speaking. Contrary, he believes that linear models of rationality (i.e. through exclusive typing forms of communication and textualism) in modern societies disembodied human knowledge.

Human geographers take a different route to sociologists and observe the agentic capabilities of individuals and groups living in urban contexts and transforming the city through sensorial and embodied activities: walking (Thomas D. R., 2007; Mauriz et al., 2016; Stevenson, 2016, 2017; Pink, 2009b) which entails an embodied presence rather than a passive passing or standing by while boarding public transport, art (Dorner, 2009; Haedicke, 2014), music (Stevenson, 2013; Ingold, 2015), dance (Haedicke, 2014), cuisine (Longhurst et al., 2010) and commensality (Fisher et al., 2017), gardening (Brown and Mussell, 1984; Cresswell, 2004), graffiti (Latham and McCormack, 2009), and many others. Thus, human geographers aim at uncovering the multisensory character and experience of the lived city space and look at a 'cultural science' of the senses.

The scientific approach to the senses look at these as separated operational systems, and sight as ranking higher on the evolutionary scale. The sensory turn in geography has shifted the focus from spatial and visual organization to sensory place-making (Howes, 2013). Human geographers who started working with the complexity of the senses complemented their observations (i.e. the bidimensionality of the vision) pixels. The

media are instruments which extend our sensibilities into the environment (Stevenson, 2013; Ingold, 2015). Through the use of media these scholars explore reality first hand in multi-sensorial forms. They oppose to the prevailing Western idea of the precultural nature of the senses, a 'cultural science' of senses or the formalization of sensorial methods for the exploration and understanding of place and culture. For this reason, the geographers of the city fashioned the word 'sensescapes' to replace the motionless idea of landscape, more related to the visual perception of spatial organization in painting and literary traditions (Cosgrove, 1998). Instead, these scholars study the dynamisms of space through a broad range of sensorial experiences, resulting in smell-scapes, sound-scapes, walk-scapes, body-scapes and other -scape forms. They give relevance to how each sense contributes to the appreciation of the different qualities of spaces, the orientation of individuals in space (Urry, 2011; Porteous 1990), the formation of sensorial memories, the creation of special spaces of expression and place-making.

Law (2001) recounts the Filipino women's urban smellscape of Little Manila in Hong Kong. The culinary smell of their street food, however, is claimed to be inappropriate for a smart area like the city centre. Little Manila contradicts the imagined city which is in competition with the other global cities of the world for being a lustrous economic centre. Polemics have risen from the Chinese living there. Indeed, olfactory is a powerful politicized sense which allows the Filipino women to transform Hong Kong into a livable settlement and connect with their home. Dugan (2011) explores the smellscape in everyday life of early modern England. She describes the nexus between perfumes (e.g. incense, rose, sassafras, rosemary, ambergris and jasmine) and spaces where the individuals perform their social rituals (e.g. churches, courts, markets, gardens, ridden households, contact zones, plague infested places) and the importance that smell has in people's daily actions. Dugan (2011) also takes inspiration from the old vocabulary of smell used in the Renaissance (e.g. ambered, fetored, halited, breathful, embathed, endulced, halited, incensial, odorant, pulvil). She shows that people had a large range of expressions to discuss their various experiences of smell which progressively disappeared due to the prominence given to visualism. The pedestrian accounts in Degen (2008) recount the public spaces and life in Manchester and Barcelona from the viewpoint of sense-scapes. Rather than discussing the vanguard stylistic design of the two cities, which

put Manchester and Barcelona at the forefront of the modern European city, she looks at their degraded neighbourhood areas, precisely Castelfield and el Raval. She describes these areas through smell, noise, and taste embedded in the experiences of people who live there. In particular, Degen (2008) portrays a vignette of the nighttime tastescapes of Castelfields, a row of pubs frequented by drunk people, where noises of broken glasses and the stink of alcohol makes the area a dreadful, dirty and threatening place for the residents. She argues that a renewal project should proceed first through a regeneration of sensescapes, or the disrupted sensorial experiences of connection of individuals to place. Another work which has contributed to the sensorial turn by historian Corbin (1986), shows how before the sensorial turn, the senses were already used as instruments to explore social life and ambience. Corbin (1986) brought smell to scholastic and political attention when he described the French cities in the nineteenth-century from the point of odor and smells, to capture the social and public issues related to the scarce hygiene of living in a modern city. Besides, he observed how olfaction is a fundamental part of sociality. Odors have been enlisted to regulate space accessibility on the basis of race and class divisions, as well as vicinity and proximity of interpersonal relationships. For instance, the Chinese, as other non-Western ethnic groups migrated in Western countries, have been racially discriminated as the odor of their fried food prepared in takeaway was attached to ideas of grease carried by their bodies within the passage from the uncivilized to the civilized world. Their food was only eaten by a lower class of people, and their restaurants were located in city ghettos, before their cuisine started to gain popularity and their restaurants spread all over the city (Tse, 2009).

Feld and Brenneis's (2004) ethnography in Southern Europe explores the acustemology of bells in pastoral environments (e.g. animals bells, church bells, carnival bells, town bells) and the social culture of music of these communities. Although this study is not conducted in the city, still it is interesting to understand how sound is embodied in the experience of place-making. The bells are for these people the equivalent of birds for the Kaluli tribe. Music bells not only construct a sonoric sense of place for the inhabitants, but are embodied manifestations of cultural values, meanings and social relationship of these communities which are externalized through the production of local music and folklore. In *'Manchester through Ears'*, Stevenson (2015) listens to the soundwalking compositions of a student of acoustics who has come to Manchester from Indonesia. The student

relates to three particular places of the city with which she has familiarized herself through sounds which connect her to back home. She composes a new Gamelan, a performative music gathering played back home in Indonesia, where people do not hear music only through the sound but through collective ears.

The Dorner and Rastl's (2014) artistic street project in Barcelona looks at the relationships between human body, space and urban landscape. They created a portfolio of touchscapes around the city by filling them with human bodies in the city voids like hallways, under furniture and archways. The result shows how the human bodies, shaped into forms, transformed the cities and relate to the existing architecture. In another project which followed this one, dancers and circus artists were engaged to perform and simulate living sculptures, like ladders and other forms of modern urban architectonic elements. In addition to showing how movement of humans could be the focus of attention in spite of buildings, the authors proved how people are the living part of the urban environment. Thus, infrastructures and buildings become extensions of the human body. People usually attend those spaces and transform meanings through their movements and actions. Geographers have developed sensitive approaches to urban regeneration and gentrification, rather than the industrial schemes adopted by city planners (Degen 2008). For the scholars of the senses, sensuous studies should consider the interactions that individuals sustain with their living spaces (Pink, 2012, 2009a; Pink et al., 2017), and the city should consider the embodied and sensory needs of the citizens (Law, 2001; Longhurst et al., 2009).

In this section, the bias of the 'precultural' nature of the senses has been discussed in light of the affirmation of the new trend research in sensory practice and place-making. Place-making sheds light on the multisensorial sensibilities of urban dwellers. Most of the time senses are made dormant, as the urban experience values vision and auditory contacts in spite of other sensorium. In particular, sensory research aims at raising a sensorial awareness regarding place, the centrality of the individual in place, and the fact that place is constantly re-constructed while engaging with it (Ingold 2000; Stevenson, 2016), which enables individuals to feel part of the city in which they live. The following section introduces the third prevailing idea in Western philosophy, or the textualization and observational practice in anthropological fieldwork. It argues its historical value, as well as its limits, for the shift to the paradigm of the sens

5.2 The historical value of textualization in sensory methodological practice

This section discusses the third prevailing idea of Western thought as regard to the senses, the textualization in sense research. It argues that on the one hand, textualization has represented an impediment to the formalization of the discipline of the senses, and for the researchers' multi-sensorial engagement with reality (Classen, 1997). On the other, in current anthropological and ethnographic practice words are still used to represent the data. Practitioners of the school of the senses are engaging with new representational forms which encompass discourse. However, the idea of discarding textualism to represent reality by now seems more a concern of engineers who work on the new techs and electronics.

Sensory practice, gradually emerged when early anthropologists started to move away from an excess of textualism in their work. Especially in the 60's, with the rise of the linguistic movement, and until the 80's, anthropologists were compelled with the philosophy of language and semiotic theories in spoken and written texts (Hacker, 2013). They privileged interviews to collect their data, represented and circulated their findings in form of narratives, themes or discourses, and read culture and human performances as texts (Grimshaw, 2001). Following Parker (1999), verbocentrism in research was not able to explain other types of visual-based texts such as comics, advertisements, signs, and TV programs, resulting in inadequate ways to explore the new symbolic systems utilized in Western society.

McLuhan (1962), argues that technologies determine the cultural sensorial of Western societies. As a result, the diffusion and application of technological devices, like photo cameras and audio-recorders, emphasized visual forms of communication and enhanced visual research in academia (Pink, 2006, 2009a). The image replaced text and words in the representation of reality, and sight became the dominant sense through which human's approached reality (McLuhan, 1962; Ong, 1967). Cultural and senses scholars confronted the limitations of language with the sensorial experience of humans and argued that language did not exhaust the meanings of the world (Howes 1991; Stahl 2008). Western textual analysis of reality was not suitable to non-Western and pre-literate societies (Classen, 1997). Moreover, participant observation was in doubt as a method, since it translated in notes the observation of reality (Classen, 1997). Notwithstanding, language

is still the form in which researchers presented and commented on the visual (Lawthom, 2011).

Sensory ethnographic practice (Pink, 2009a; Dicks et al., 2011; Harrop and Njaradi, 2013) in the 20th and 21st centuries emerged right in the midst of the technological upraise in the 90's. New visual devices started to spread in many areas of life. For instance, the diffusion of other electronics, like speech and aural technologies such as radios, audio tape recorders, telephones, and new media like videocameras, mobile phones, robots, drones, interactional blackboards, computers, webcam and camcorders. This gave the impulse to investigate and record the multisensorial nature of reality through devices which were considered as extensions of the human sensorium (McLuhan, 1962). The new devices captured the tridimensional aspect of reality and reduced the enthusiasm on the visual, as they demonstrated that sight was not a precise science (Lawthom, 2011), whilst increasing the interest in other sensorial forms such as olfactory, haptic, hearing and synaesthesia. McLuhan (1962), argues that media amplify a 'tribal' multisensorial sensibility in the individuals. Indeed, these times accounted for a proliferation of works from the literature of senses (Bynum and Porter 1993; Classen, 1993; Synnott, 1993; Jay, 1994).

Additionally, the emergence of embodiment studies, granted ethnographers the possibility to account their own experiences and refine their practices and use of their bodies and senses within their methodologies (Seremetakis 1994; Ingold 2000; Sutton 2001; Howes 2003; Pink 2004). For instance, Fed (2012) initially defined his ethnographic practice an 'anthropology of sounds', then moved on to call it an 'anthropology in sound', and finally used the term 'acoustemology'. The difference lies in the recognition of the implication of the body and the sensorial in the production of data and the construction of reality. He started by considering sound as an object of study and an isolated phenomena (i.e. anthropology of sounds), to self-analyzing the impact of sound on himself, a realization to live within sound (i.e. anthropology in sound), to the consideration of being part and producing the sound (i.e. acoustemology). Thus, ethnographic fieldwork led to different forms of recording and assessing information.

If on the one hand the new technologies are going in the direction of replacing the textual with hypertextualism and virtual forms of representations (Lawthom, 2011) on the other, researchers are continuing to utilize texts to explain their results. Besides, the sensorial research practitioners do not ban classic methodologies, such as interviewing, from their practice. They, rather, explore how different forms of representations can work together. Returning to Stevenson's (2013: 214-215) soundwalks, his noteworthy words recites:

...we sat together, listening to Phoebe's compositions. As we listened Phoebe showed me the textual narratives she had written to accompany her soundscape compositions. We listened to the recordings, talked them over, and talked over them.

It is in the reflexive practice of *'talking them over and talking over them'* (Stevenson, 2013: 214-215) that reality becomes a co-constructed representation between writing, talking, and sounds. Howes, argues that perception is produced by con-sensus, or 'sensing along with others' (2013: 9), whereas implicitly social values and cultural codes direct the way we sense the reality. For Ingold (2015), senses are the result of waiting upon and responding to the 'other'. These innovative thoughts contrast with the exclusive and personal experiences of sensation in mainstream psychology, focused on visual and sensorial data such as personal space (proxemic), nonverbal communication (eye-contact) (Lawthom, 2011), and an individual's intentionality (Ingold, 2015). Similarly, ethnographers and anthropologists still employ extensively photos in their work (Pink, 2008). However, scholars like Pink (2001) offer an approach to photos which extends beyond the consideration of the image to the context of photos, in order to produce richer understanding and representations of reality. Photos are used along their work as lenses which linger further in the environment or as instruments which, although saying very little for themselves, elicit the exploration of feelings and sensations in the viewer (Byers, 1966). Scholars of the senses seek to give discrete and personal representations of reality, other than offering an "overview" of reality. Textualization in sense research has an historical value, since it primed the shift to modern methodologies of the senses. Through textualization, the modern scholarships made use of new texts in their practice (Parker, 1999). They also understood the new positioning of the actor perceiving reality and the construction of the research relationship between perceiving subjects.

Howes (2018), argues for a sensitive perceptual approach called cross-modal aesthetics that is more complex than the perceptual approach of linguistic and visual forms. He studies the healing ceremonies of the Shipibo-Conibo Indians of Peru, performed by shamans in the form of therapies. The result is a synaesthetic feeling which takes place on three levels. First, the shaman inspired by hallucinogens imagines geometric pictorials which he traces on faces, bodies, and textiles. Through them, the shaman reorders the messy body of the patient at a visual level. Second, he also disperses the patient of vivacious perfumes, like tobacco and herbs, which serve to clean up the body from the bad spirits or the pathogenic aura. Third, he sings the geometric images which he visualizes on the sheets of the patient and which are descending on his mouth to be sung. Thus, the perceptual is an intersensory camp. The geometric forms are registered in three forms: designed, voiced songs and perfume recipes. Following this example, scholars also experimented with the multiuse of media (Stoller 1997; Herzfeld 2000; Pink 2006), which allowed them to capture reality in its multisensorial forms in different ways. For instance, by selecting the best media in the specific research context, the multi-sited ethnographies (Marcus 1995) enlarge the field of observation and compare 'realities' and even transnational ethnographies (Wilding, 2007). Disciplines like geography benefited from the advancement in technologies to produce cultural maps instead of two-dimensional and scalar cartographic models of the world or create more participatory sensorial methods, such as soundwalk, smellwalk and touch tour (Degen 2008; Kheshti, 2009; Henshaw 2013). Urban studies could certainly benefit from these. However, the study of indigenous societies and their systems of representation, or their sensorial knowledge of reality, also contributed in launching the development of sensorial methods (Howes, 2013). Another new sensorial approach is called museology, which encourages visitors to museums to experience the multisensual nature of spaces, objects and their meanings (Edwards et al., 2006; Dudley 2010; Howes, 2014). This method consists on eliciting sensorial experiences through fashioning ambiances with scents, labels, illumination tricks, and special sounds, or invoking the same sensorial experience through particular sensory materials, shapes and textiles. This way the individuals get the meaning of their embodied experiences of space and objects through their sensual perceptions. The idea of setting a special space to stimulate human sensorial experience whilst using the senses as a methodological tool, has also to do with the objectualization of the senses, since the

preparation of embiences consists of developing an artificial space with the use of a special sensorial. Finally, other applications are emerging in Japan as a new disciplinary field, the medical anthropology of sensation (Hinton, et al. 2008). Yosuke Shimazono (Howes, 2013) describes how for patients who have undergone kidneys transplant the kidneys are organs which emit visceral sensations like “pulses” or “knock” or are imagined being like a fetus. In this case, the kidneys become sensations and objects of sensations through which patients make sense of their transplant experience. Some of these methods will be covered in the creative methods, Chapter 7.

On a final note, the senses fall into an epistemological ambiguity in methodological practice. On the one hand, they can be studied as objects, as shown with examples about the sensory dimension of history (Roeder, 1994), or through the study of the culture of the senses in early anthropological work. On the other hand, they became methodological tools to explore people, places and objects. The line of demarcation is anyway never neat in the literature, since their high level of ‘indexicality’ makes them optimal lens to explore further aspects of society. Additionally, sensorial approaches do not exclude the study of senses as objects as well.

5.6 Summary

This chapter has offered an overview of the development of the senses as a discipline and an emergent creative methodological practice. This research incorporates the senses as an object of study and a social inquiry or a methodological practice, and argues that it is difficult to study them separately. The chapter, also, has discussed the research of the senses and its compliance with textual methods. In this respect, this research offers a novel approach to illustrate this compliance. The following Chapter 6, discusses traditional methodology and methods and the design of the study.

Chapter 6

Methodology: traditional, creative and sensorial methods



Fig. 6.1 Recipe for the research. Cooking *instructions* for the Vietnamese spring rolls; *preparation* of a Chinese dinner, a potato cut; *ingredients* of the Vietnamese Pho. Photos by author.

6.1 Recipe for research

In this chapter, I draw a recipe for a creative methodology. Firstly I introduce the theoretical background of the study with phenomenology by Merleau Ponty (1962) and the phenomenological approaches from which I draw the study (*instructions*). Secondly, I list the *ingredients* or the methods employed in this thesis. For the purpose, I use a timeline, or a bibliography of methods (Pink and Mackley, 2012), to show the data collection process, the methods employed and the locations where I collected the data. This keeps transparent and clear the research process and illustrates my journey throughout it. Third, the section 'getting to know participants' explains my *foodsteps* throughout this research, by presenting my role as the researcher and my own journey, and how I built the relationship with the participants. Fourthly, I succeed by outlining the two phases of this research. The traditional ethnographic methods were used in the first phase of the study. It follows the *preparation* of the method with creative methodology through the metaphor of the recipe (Qualitative Research Cafe, 2016). I recount how I have extended traditional ethnographic methods in sensorial methods, and I present the the sensorial and visual methods employed in this study, including visual methodologies, walking interviews and phenomenological mapping and argue how I have blended them together creatively. Then, I discuss how my methodology is eclectic and original through the creative and sensorial methods and a multimethod approach (Morse, 2003) in the

second phase of the research. I, also, account the advantages of using a creative method in this study. I 'serve' the *meal* (outcome) by illustrating my contribution to methods, a new phenomenological mapping approach that I have developed and called 'tablographies'.

6.1 Instructions: epistemological and ontological basis of the research

The epistemological and ontological foundations of this study are phenomenological. Phenomenology claims that the emplaced nature of human perception, becomes even more obvious when navigating through the boundaries of cultures (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Reality is constructed by the embodied and intersubjective experiences of the world, the phenomena. Whilst individuals have different phenomenal experiences, perception is not an isolated event, which is incommunicable and incomprehensible to others. Classic ethnography conceived fieldwork as a circumscribed and delimited space in which the researcher recorded what she 'objectively' was seeing. Instead, phenomenology conceives perception as the result of interpersonal dynamics that are at stake in the perceptual field. During fieldwork, the observer is in relation to the position of the others and makes decisions to maintain and/or change it (Pink, 2012). Indeed, perception is grounded into social history, and as such perceiving is always a social and cultural form transferable to and from others. In social and ethnographic research, fieldwork is co-constructed through a series of recursive acts of perception, as an open-ended space and a hermeneutic 'text'.

Phenomenology pertains to the senses (Pink, 2008), the body (Ingold, 2000), and the 'heart' (Pelias, 2004; Owton, 2017). Western philosophy conceives the body and the mind (i.e. the material and immaterial) as two different and hierarchical levels that explain how humans work. However, phenomenology sees the body and the mind as a continuity within two different sensorial experiences. Knowledge is not separated from the information processed at the 'elementary' level of our body. Reality is sensorial, material, and immaterial, all at the same time.

Contrary to classic anthropology, modern forms of ethnography take into consideration how the ethnographer understands and (co)produces the field (Pelias, 2004). For instance, the methodology of the 'heart' (Behar, 1996; Pelias, 2004; Owton, 2017),

addresses the point that the ethnographer's feelings are also part of the way the ethnographer reads the phenomenon in which she is participating. In this respect, the ethnographer perceives and constructs the reality both viscerally and emotionally. Ethnographic work in this thesis, echoes my feelings and reflexive experience through the fieldwork.

Gibson's ecological theory of perception (2015), considers how the environment stimulates and structures our perception. In this respect, I agree that 'things' are not radically and consistently 'lifeless' or 'raw data' (Seremetakis, 1994; Sheridan and Chamberlain, 2011), which inputs from 'out there' through the nerves, straight to the mind. Indeed, objects and subjects are not distinct entities from our perception of them (Lawthom and Tindall, 2011). Human beings are part of their dwelling environment and transform it. Similarly, 'things' are prolongations of their body and mind as a whole (Whatmore, 2006). Winterson (1997: 85), calls it the 'livingness' of the world. Cultural and human geographers shift their interest to the vitality of the sensory environment, rather than looking indifferently at materiality. They oppose the distinction between geo (hearth) and bio (life), as an old fashioned idea which considers the land, the environment, and the nature as death spaces versus the life world of humans (in Greek 'psychē' or breathe). Instead, they explain 'things' and space as embedded in the corporeality of people's everyday lives (Whatmore, 2006).

The following section discusses the different phenomenological approaches which I have used in this study, through examples from the literature and my own work.

6.1.1 The phenomenological approaches of the research

A number of approaches based on phenomenology are useful to this research. In this section, I review some of these approaches and explain how they represent a theoretical framework in this research.

First, sensory ethnography by Pink (2009a). Although Gibson's (2015) ecological theory and Merleau-Ponty's (1945) human's 'emplacement', affirm, respectively, the role of the environment and subjectivity in structuring perception, they founded their phenomenology predominantly on vision. Sensory ethnography is a phenomenological

stance that is based on the interconnectivity of the senses and the sensorial forms of experience (Pink, 2009a). It considers the senses as embedded in the embodied practices of everyday life. Many scholars have considered the role of food practices in the production of ethnographic knowledge, such as sensorial walking (Stevenson, 2016), cooking (Law, 2001; Marte, 2007) food trade (Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos, 2014) and food shopping (Vázquez-medina and Medina, 2016).

Seremetakis, (1994) and Probyn (2000) suggest that eating with others opens the ethnographer to new awareness and knowledge regarding the existence of cultural differences. Pink (2008), describes how social habits encouraged the ethnographic practice in the slow movement project. Through eating, she attuned to the way the city dwellers in Mold felt. Longhurst et al. (2010), observed migrant women in Hamilton, New Zealand, preparing their staple foods and ate with them. The 'visceral' approach granted a deep understanding of the women's lives and homes.

Sensory approach in this research led to the exploration of the meanings of home in sensorial food practices of South-East Asian women. I employed a multimethod and multimedia approach, using photos, videos, and audio-recorded walking interviews in different urban (semi) public contexts, to grasp the multisensorial embedded in the everyday life of women. This methodological practice aligned the women's and my perceptions whilst making, touching, smelling and tasting foods, besides keeping and maintaining the richness of our cultural differences.

Second, my methodology takes inspiration from embodiment theory (Stoller, 1989, 1997; Seremetakis 1994; Feld, 2012a; Feld and Basso, 2012). Scholars of embodiment argue that the body is a 'tool being' (Thrift, 2008: 10). Cognition does not reside in the brain, and it is not situational. Rather, it is related to the characteristics of one's body through its performances and sensitivity. Cognition, also, extends to the environment through human interactions and the objects that the body contacts. Ingold (2000), argues that perception is not the ultimate achievement of a mind in a body, but of the whole organism in its environment. More specifically, individuals know through their bodies with an:

...unparalleled ability to co-evolve with things, taking them in and adding them to different parts of the biological body to produce something which ... would resemble a

constantly evolving distribution of different hybrids with different reaches (Thrift, 2008: 7).

Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos (2014), call it corporeality, which is the cognition of the reality through the body, and the belief that cognition is modelled by the use, perception and the representations of the body in a cultural system. The trade of Arcarajé food in Bahia, San Salvador Brazil, is a cultural institution. It has its fundamentals in the informal cooking apprenticeship of the Baianas Brazilian female children from their mothers. Through cooking, the mothers have taught the female children not just how to make Arcarajé (know-how), learned by observing and repeating their mother's cooking gestures. Instead, the Baianas inherited a more complex system of knowledge, present at physical, perceptual and emotional levels. Cognition for Baianas street vendors is an embodied process of knowing. It is linked to the inter-subjective emotional relationship with their mothers, and the development of this relationship through the ordinarily sensorial interactions that the women have with food and the tools for its preparation. The cognition of the world is based on the emotional and sensorial experience of food. Baianas street vendors extend this embodied and sensorial cognition through food practices to the way they perceive themselves and their professional identity. They make the streets where they work and their own country, their home (Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos, 2014). In this thesis, I am arguing that place-making is an embodied process related to the knowledge that the women construct through performing their mundane food practices.

Third, is the performative theory (Banes and Lepecki, 2007; Dirksmeier and Helbrecht, 2008) with its emphasis on human performances. Schechner, defines performance as '*any action that is framed, enacted, presented, highlighted, or displayed*' (2017: 2).

Performative theory focuses on a plethora of artistic and aesthetic performances, poetry, live art, protest action, sport, drama, cooking, social and political events, rituals, public and religious ceremonies, and popular entertainment. Performative scholars argue that these artistic performances are lived metaphors (Goffman, 1959; Sun and Fei, 2013; Schechner, 2017); they allude and address political and contextual sensitivity of people (Haanstad, 2014).

The list could be further expanded to everyday life performances. Moreover, with the progress of the society many new performances are included, and the old ones revised. Single historical, social, cultural circumstances cannot frame and explain the performances of migrant groups, but these are always in revision and remain intercultural (Geertz, 1973). The concept of performance is suitable to the idea that this research embraces, that is to explore individual's life experiences. I consider everyday life as the stage where the women and I perform home. Furthermore, performances have different meanings and can be different things at the same time. For instance, food practices have been studied in this research as rebellious acts, rituals and even as a sort of 'dance' (see Chapter 9).

Performative scholars look at human behaviours to explain what people are showing in the activity of their doing (Schechner, 2017). In this respect, while artifact may look apparently stable outcomes (e.g. an object like a painting), it is the inquiry around that 'object' that revitalizes the liveliness and action behind it, despite its material strand. Ramayana, is a mythological masque dance performed in the national theatres around Southeast Asia in different forms. Haanstad (2014), studied the meanings that this dance entails in Thailand and Cambodia. He explained that these theatrical performances have come out of the theatre and have been transformed by people in street performances, because of the political transformations that took place in the country. Through the metaphor of Ramayana, the people expressed the meanings of life and took part in these political events. At the same time, Haanstad (2014) chose to be part of these performances by exhibiting himself in street music songs, which he himself produced and performed by using khon and lakhon khol theatre based on Ramayana. As a result, his exhibitions became part of the inquiry, which served to revitalize and study the multiform that performance has, while being a participant himself.

Karaosmanoglu (2009), argues that food is naturally performative. He explains how the modern urban setting of Istanbul became the theatrical scene of restaurateurs since the 1990's. Restaurateurs perform the history of the city through their versions of cuisine, tastes, the style of their restaurants, the services and the ambiances. The categorization of restaurants (e.g. meyhanes or taverns, ev yemekleri or home-made food, fish restaurants, kebab and meat restaurants, fine and traditional esnaf lokantas etc.) and the

food activities displayed in these restaurants (e.g. the serving style, the ambience, the customers attracted, the decorations of the plates, the blending of the tastes) are not just about mere consumption and business. The restaurants are spectacular forms of production of a new Istanbul between the monarchic Ottoman past and the present changed political context. Particularly, he focuses on two models of restaurants. The fine-dining restaurants *esnaf lokantas* for business diners (e.g. *Tug Ğra* or the signature of the Ottoman sultans, *Feriye* a restaurant in an Ottoman building of the 19th century, *Çintemani* or an Ottoman motif and *Asitane*, which is one of the old names of Istanbul) and the more traditional *esnaf lokantas* which cater for the new working class men and women mainly at lunch time. In the fine-dining restaurants *esnaf lokantas*, the chefs create plates resulting from an industrious archival research of ancient recipes and fuse it with modern international cuisines. The canteen-style restaurants offer a more traditional version of Ottoman cuisine. Here, the re-enactment of the past is based on the master-to-apprentice or father-to-son relationship, and it is associated to familiarity rather than difference with the past.

In this research, I look at migrant women's food practices as performances. I argue that these food practices do not have stable cultural and representational meanings. Instead, I inquire the sensorial, emotional, affective and semiotic behaviours behind them. These practices voice how the women enact life and place abroad, their needs and ideas of home. My participation is central to understanding these sensorial practices. By taking part in these performances, I have explored meanings of daily food practices, which go beyond their cultural contextualization. Instead, these practices are multicultural, affective and based on the sensorial sensibilities of the women.

Performative ethnography is not about the representation of cultures, but requires an innovative and reflexive approach. Performances imply a ceaseless movement and challenge, and the ethnographer must be conscious of it. The performing behaviour is subjected to social and historical changes. Since performances are conceptualised as extemporal phenomena, or 'meanings in motion', they are also difficult to grasp just through recording them (Desmond, 2003). In this respect, they cannot be studied as distinct and isolated phenomena (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Performances are liminal occurrences that work as autonomic events with their own time-structure (Dirksmeier and Helbrecht, 2008). For this reason, performative ethnography supports

new versions of participant observation (Jones, 2002). A reflexive participation and action are the only way to access the meaning of these performances. Indeed, the ethnographer cannot seek ideological neutrality by being absent from the performance. Instead, she has to acknowledge how the rehearsal processes, her stance, and the positions of the others in the fieldwork impact on the outcome.

In this research, I consider women's food practices as limited and circumscribed performances. As such, I do not focus on the outcomes (e.g. dishes) but on the actions in a flow of events. For this purpose, I have used sensorial maps as performances. In this research, the purpose is to capture the liveliness, the agency, and embodiment of women's life in action. I have commented on those through a methodological and personal reflexive process as a participant and contributor to the events.

At last, performances are dialogical and co-produced events. The knowledge between cultures passes through embodied performances, as an exchange. Performances are a form of agency and always reveal aspects of resistance, criticism, and intervention (Schechner, 2017). Food practices are relational performances where the women and I get to know each other and our experiences through exchanging and eating the food of the 'other'. The embodied knowledge that passes through our shared performances is not about our cultures, but more deeply connected to the meaning of 'where we are in the place where we are'.

Fourth, is the non-representational theory (Thrift, 2008). Non-representationalism (Thrifts, 2008) differs from representations. Non-representational forms of cognition include body expressions such as gestures, walking, movements, equilibrium, orientation, proprioception, sensations and synaesthesia, feelings and emotions. Examples of embodied cognitions are walking (Stevenson, 2013), cooking (Shapiro, 2014), and driving (Thrift, 2004). The classic formats of representation, such as texts, images, symbols and icons, which show a static picture of reality, have pre-individual and pre-signifying meanings (Latham and McCormack, 2009). Visual texts like photos evoke affection and sensations which are felt in body even before individuals understand their meanings (Latham and McCormack, 2009).

In this research non-representationalism is important for crafting creative methodologies, which is different from classic observation. Cooking is an activity that allows the women

to explore the precognitive, spontaneous and playful dimensions of life. These dimensions emerge as playful dimensions (Thrift, 2008) since the women have engaged with the positive and empowering aspects of cooking and domesticity.

Fifth, my methodology also draws on critical and feminist psychology (Davis A. Y., 1981; Burman, 1998; Hesse-Biber, 2000; Avakian and Harper, 2005), critical developmental psychology (Burman, 1994) and critical psychoanalysis (Kristeva, 2014). This work focuses on issues related to the everyday life of women, such as the home and the household, and food and cooking intersected with aspects of gender migration. Critical and feminist psychology seeks to shed light on issues regarding race, class and gender on the everyday life. The critical developmental psychology and critical psychoanalytic approaches in this thesis discuss aspects of knowledge relating to the research process and the position of women, migrants, mothers and daughters in the development of this knowledge. Aspects of femininity and the female body are referred to in order to understand the unique positions that women have in relation to this knowledge.

In this section I have explained the phenomenological approaches from which I draw upon in this thesis. Although, these approaches are treated as separate epistemologies in the discussion, in the ethnographic work they are not mutually exclusive. The following section will present the timeline data collection of this thesis, that guides to the rest of the chapter.

6.3 Timeline data collection

The methods described below have been utilised and developed along a period of 5 years, as I started the Ph.D. as a part-time student. In this section, I illustrate a timeline of my data collection with the research methods employed in the two phases of the research and at different stages of the Ph.D. journey.

Table 6.1. Timeline data collection

Timing	Method/s	Location
Phase 1	<i>Traditional ethnographic methods</i>	
2013-2015	Interviews Participant observation Fieldnotes	Manchester and Leeds
Phase 2	<i>Creative and sensorial ethnographic methods</i>	
2014-2015	<i>Banquet Ethnography</i> (participant observation, photos, recipes, mapping)	Manchester
2014-2016	<i>Market Ethnography (walking ethnography, mapping, photos, videos)</i>	Leeds

I started fieldwork in Manchester where I conducted interviews with the women between 2013 and 2014. Whilst conducting interviews, observations and fieldnotes were also employed. The photos were initially used as visual prompts that elicited the memories of my research journey, whilst later were used to support the analysis. The interviews were analyzed in 2014 and presented in my MPhil report. In 2015 I transferred full-time and in between 2014-2016 the ethnographic work was completed. However, the ethnographic work was analyzed between 2016 and 2018, between my relocation to China and my return to Italy.

The rest of this chapter is structured as it follows. The first phase of the research illustrates the traditional ethnographic methods. The design of the study in this first phase of the research includes recruitment and access and getting to know the participants, that explain how I have accessed and built relationships with different women and communities. I also describe the participants' profile. It follows the traditional food interviews section that explains the preparation of the interview schedule and a section about the advantages and limitations of working with traditional ethnographic methods. In the second phase of the research I introduce the design of the study and explain how I extended emplaced single interviews and thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and

Clarke, 2006) into more creative and sensorial methods. I also discuss the advantages of creative and sensorial methods and present my contribution to methods, the tablographies. I include personal and methodological reflexivity, the ethics and a summary of the (multi)methods. The next section will introduce the 'ingredients' of the study or the methods used in the first phase of the research.

6.4 The first phase of the research

To address the research question (see Chapter 1) in the first phase of the research I planned a qualitative methodology that employs traditional ethnographic methods, namely interviews, participant observations and fieldnotes. The following section outlines these methods and I explain why and how they fit into this research. It follows the design of the study, with data gathering and participant access, the participants' profile, and the interview schedule. Finally, I discuss the advantages and limitations of traditional ethnographic methods.

6.4.1 Traditional ethnographic methods: interviews, participant observation, fieldnotes

This section, considers the qualitative traditional methods, which I have employed in this research: i.e. food interviews, participant observations and fieldnotes. These methods have been included under the definition of ethnographic methods (Kawulick, 2005).

Qualitative psychology is a naturalistic form of inquiry, which attends and interprets reality through descriptive accounts (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Traditional ethnography, from traditional anthropology, approaches individuals and communities in their social settings through 'hanging around' (Bowers 1996) for the investigation of cultural pattern and meanings (Schensul et al. 1999).

Traditional ethnographic approaches chosen for this study are:

- a) Interviews
- b) Participant observation
- c) Fieldnotes

In the following section, I briefly discuss each of these with reference to the literature.

a) Interviews

Interviewing is a collaborative encounter with an interviewee for the ethnographic exploration of sensitive topics (Burman, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The qualitative interview ranges through structured to semi-structured and unstructured forms (Bryman, 2001). Differences in place between the three forms are due to either the formats used or the depth of the information gathered (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Whilst structured interviews have a topic guide with a pre-ordered sequence of questions, which leaves little or no flexibility to the interviewer, semi-structural questions are open to changes according to the interviewee's answers. The unstructured format lacks a structure (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009) and is used to supplement other methods (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). The last two, also result in intensive conversational forms. In-depth interviewing extends and formalizes everyday conversations with a small number of respondents, to explore their perspectives on a particular issue (PRA, 2017; Boyce and Neale, 2006).

I have carried out nine rich semi-structured food interviews at the earliest stage of this study and employed a thematic analysis (TA). Thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006) is an analytic method, which is commonly reported as associated to interviewing practice. It provides a straightforward set of procedures to access the data, which are not related to any philosophy and structured techniques (Braun and Clarke 2006). This analytic method consists of systematic procedures for reducing, creating meanings, and summarising complex data (Miles and Huberman, 1994) when working with everyday experiences (Thomas D. R., 2006).

An example of ethnographic food interviews is presented by Dyck (2006). She illustrates semi-structured interviews to catch the experiences of health and illness with South Asian migrant women in British Columbia, Canada. She explains how interviews were kept sufficiently broad whilst interspacing many areas of everyday life (e.g. experiences of moving to Canada, paid and unpaid employment such as motherhood and housework, and spatialised and contextual aspects of their daily routines). Health and illness management could emerge and be talked about, also, through food practices implied in traditional medicine and self-cure. These interviews were later analyzed through a conventional thematic analysis. The themes found through the way the women talked

about and managed their health and illness conditions, highlighted the connections between body and emplacement, movement and identity and how those were entangled in power relations.

b) Participant observation

This type of data collection is used primarily in cultural anthropology and sociological research, and to a lesser degree in human geography and social psychology (De Munck and Sobo, 1998). It aims to systematically observe, participate, and take note of practices, events, behaviors and, artifacts or routines of a group of individuals in their natural settings (Marshall and Rossman, 1989).

Participant observations have been employed in the study to access and foster a link with communities and participants, as well as to know them. Notorious examples of participant observations come from anthropology. *'Argonauts of the western Pacific: an account of native enterprise and adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea'* by Malinowski (1992) describes the fundamentals of observation as a method in ethnography. These included extended methodical and direct observations of the everyday life of the Trobriand Islanders in New Guinea. In this example, the anthropologist lived for over a year within the community and learned about their routines through day-to-day interactions (Schensul et al. 1999). The records of these observations also acknowledged the presence of the ethnographer in the field through his/her self-analysis. In addition, participant observations also comprehend participation in the activities (Schensul et al. 1999), informal interviews, collective discussions and life-histories. The result is a holistic representation of the culture, with an insight into its meanings (Marshall and Rossman 1989; Erlandson, et al., 1993; Schensul et al. 1999) and its tacit knowledge (Desjarlais, 1992).

Mead's (1928) study of Samoan girls consisted of a nine months long observation and informal interviewing of the life of adolescents living in the Pacific island of Samoa. It explored adolescence and child rearing in a non-Western society. Her work included exposure to the teaching of cultural practices, dancing and reciting local rituals. The participant observation resulted exceptionally in an analytic tool for the exploration of

specific problems in this case, rather than being the study of the representation of Samoan cultural practices.

Desjarlais, (in Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002) recounts that his training as a Yolmo shaman, was about observing his body interacting and repeating actions (e.g. sipping tea or caught jokes) as a Yolmo. This provided understanding of how the images that he perceived during healing experiences of trance were directly related to how his body experienced life as a Yolmo shaman, rather than acting as a dispassionate observer.

Participant observation in the first part of this research is the observation of the different communities and participants which I met, their costumes and activities, and involved sharing some of those costumes with them with the purpose of knowing their culture.

c) Fieldnotes

With participant observation, fieldnotes are the core of ethnographic work. They consist of written records, taken in regular and systematic ways, of what the researcher observes and learns as a participant to the fieldwork. Notes can be written while interacting in the fieldwork, in the form of jotted notes, or after it as a result of memory which requires the ethnographer to reconstruct the whole experience in a written story. Notes are used to represent more broadly and coherently people's lives (Emerson et al., 2011). Fieldnotes work as diaries to take note of any progress in the fieldwork and can be used as data (Kara, 2015).

Fieldnotes in this research record information and reflexive notes of people's lives through my participation in their daily events. In particular, I wrote fieldnotes associated with interviews and participant observations to document relevant information regarding the communities and people who I met, their costumes and other aspects of life which I learnt from them. The following section illustrates the design of the study, with the preparation of the recipe by extending traditional methods in creative and sensorial methodologies.

6.4.2 Design of the study

This section introduces the design of the study. In order to explore women's food practices, I developed an interview schedule where women were talking about their daily

lives through semi-structured interviews (see the interview structure in Appendix I). First, I describe how I found and recruited the women.

6.4.3 Recruitment and access to women

In the first part of the study, recruitment successfully engaged 9 participants through different techniques: snowballing -word of mouth-; gatekeepers (e.g. my Chinese fiancé and an ex PhD student at Manchester Metropolitan University, a university fellow student); emails at the Departments of Languages in different universities; and by approaching the women in their workplaces (e.g. in shops in Chinatown).

In the beginning there were obstacles in accessing Asian women personally such as, being an outsider and Caucasian, and even approaching women through gatekeepers did not always guarantee their participation. Thus recruitment was organised in different ways. For recruitment purposes in this phase, it made a difference being known to the women. I shared with them the details regarding my position and my journey which is as follows:

I was born in Sicily, in the south of Italy, in a working class family. By cultural background has been influenced by my original family, where hand-work was about the meaning of life. My grandparents were artisans and they were also farmers in their gardens and sustained the family by producing and selling the harvest. When I was one year old in the 80's, my parents migrated to the north in Milan to make a better living. It was during the years of the booming northern industrialization. My father found employment in an airway mail company owned by the government. When I received my degree in psychology, which I attended whilst working temporary jobs in order to support my studies, the recession had started in Italy. I took the decision to move abroad in order to enhance chances for my career. In 2011, I migrated to Manchester to undertake my PhD as a part-time student. As I could not afford my studies without working, I moved between Italy and Manchester. In a couple of years, I fell in love with a Chinese man, left Manchester and relocated to Shanghai in China, where I married. I remained in China for about a year and after I became pregnant, I returned to Italy to give birth to my daughter.

As I managed to gain credibility, the women contacted their friends to ask them to also participate in the research. The strategy of snowballing is related to the culture of favour exchanges in China, and in general within diasporas who build networks of solidarity (Cohen and Vertovec, 1999); this also, has an interesting relationship with the concept of marketing strategy²⁰ through word of mouth (Sweeney et al., 2008) and the one of Guanxi²¹. These concepts are significant for understanding the context of the employed South-East Asian migrant women in this research. Those will be further discussed in the ethics section 6.3. The following section describes the participants.

6.4.4 Getting to know the participants: first footsteps

The section presents the visual material that I recorded throughout the fieldwork in the first phase of the research. Foodsteps is a word which I fashioned to represent my journey into the research process, and explains how the participants and I built relationships in this study through the vitality of food. These material is presented at the end of this Chapter, they are some photos that the women and I took and shared during our engagements.

Throughout the fieldwork, I made constant efforts in recruiting the participants through the different techniques that I mentioned in the previous section. In this section, I explain successive steps which I have undertaken to know better the participants and enhance collaboration. This was very important in order to gain trust and give the idea that I was not only interested in gathering information from the women, as it often happens in exploitative research practice. Instead, getting to know the participants included an open hearted attitude in engaging them in their places and practices of everyday life. While conducting interviews in the first phase of the research, I have started to pay attention and record the context of these engagements either by drafting, jotting notes, and taking photos. At first, these were utilised to recollect thoughts and facilitate the homework of reviewing fieldnotes. However, later I found intriguing this idea of extending textual fieldnotes into photos for their dialogical features, as they continually return meanings to

²⁰Marketing studies have found that the word of mouth technique (WOM) is extremely valid for the promotion of services. This is based on the credibility of the person who promotes, and on the nature and quality of the relationship between the receiver and the seller.

²¹ Business relationships in Chinese society.

us (Rose, 2003). The images recall moments of life which would have been otherwise forgotten. Especially the photos complemented the notes with words that I could not write down during the interview, or represented visceral experiences of diverse cultures that I could not verbalise. Photos were visual and sensorial memos that elicited the feelings connected to these encounters. Interestingly, these photos also recalled noteworthy information about local costumes and the culture of participants. Moreover, the photo-memos, that I present below, represent the connections that I made with people, communities, and places throughout my fieldwork. They attest my constant efforts as an ethnographer and a migrant woman in knowing these communities and cementing relationships with the participants, and the way the participants have engaged with me to produce a shared ownership of the research.

I now comment on the photos that I have organized in four sets. Respectively, two photo-sets feature the locations where I conducted the interviews or where I have walked in search of participants, the third photo-set are some photos shared with me by a participant, the fourth is about women's homemade food.

The first photo-set (four photos) portrays a Chinese bakery in Chinatown in Manchester, mooncakes²² in a glass window, a coconut drink, and a Hong Kong creamy bun. The locations were chosen by the participants, which itself was an enormous advantage for me in order to explore the locations where the women attended in their daily life. The photos were taken at the Chinese bakery in Chinatown on different days. In this place, I met the participants either formally for the interview and informally to discuss their culture and their involvement in projects around food. The photos describe customs that I observed and enjoyed while I was there. The mooncakes in the glass case were displayed at the entrance of the bakery around the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival²³. On that occasion, one participant kindly offered to buy one for me to try. Conducting an interview in the Chinese bakery, a space which is only a few meters large and very busy, turned out to be a great opportunity to know more about the life in Chinatown, places that are significant for the women and the community, but also about their food culture, the re-

²² Traditional round pastries filled with thick and sweet red beans (dousha), lotus seeds paste or yolk eggs, kernels with the crust decorated with Chinese characters. They are consumed only at this time of the year and gifted to family and friends as a sign of devotion, care and respect.

²³ One of the fourth most popular festival in China.

making of traditions abroad, and the enterpraneurship of these communities. Following this first meeting, I have invited another participant, originally from Hong Kong, to attend a meeting at the bakery. The last picture, a soya coconut milk, which I have ordered for myself, is a tasty memory made while waiting for a her to discuss a project about community gardening in Manchester. The Hong Kong creamy bun is what the woman consumed on that occasion. These photos recall memories about sharing with the women their traditions not only through listening to their narrations, but also by participanting and knowing them through eating their special foods. This photo-set, also, captures how I embraced popular Chinese food ways and became familiar with Chinatown as a part of Manchester as home.

The second photo-set (two photos) was taken at the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist temple in Manchester, where I was invited by one of the participants who attended the regular cult activities on Sundays. The Chinese style dining room is the place where I conducted the interview. On that occasion, I also had a chance to visit the temple and get to know about this Buddhist community. Interestingly, the community engages in communal praying and eating in a kitchen where they prepare vegetarian meals in line with the Buddhist tradition. For the participant, eating at the temple was a way to relieve the lonely feelings of eating alone every day, especially at festivals. That meeting was particularly intriguing since it gave me some perspective about the diversity of the communities in Manchester (i.e. especially considering the diverse background of the people at the temple) and life styles that they embrace.

The third photo-set (two photos) are places where I have walked, either seeking participants, attending community events or conducting interviews. The photo of the archway in Chinatown reminds me of the place where I have spent a considerable time wandering around and exploring the streets and the shops and attending community events. The other photo is a Chinese supermarket in a corner of the city that I have discovered while walking back from an interview. Getting into these places has enlarged my knowledge about the community, the spaces where they started their own businesses and the ones where the community gathers.

The fourth photo-set (three photos) has been taken by a participant. The photos show

how the woman navigates the city and expresses her belonging through the consumption of Western and Chinese food. The last of the three pictures was taken from the internet, and it came with a participant's note "watch out for these (Chinese) biscuits". These are Chinese almonds biscuits that she saw for the first time after many years in the UK in a Chinese supermarket. These photos represent the way migrant people are connected to their countries through the global market. The shortcut, in particular, is about virtual and human networks that migrant women shape when passing down useful information (i.e. where to find their foods) to other conational in order to ease relocation. Besides, the woman clearly shows her involvement in this research through sharing these photos with me.

The last photo-set (three photos) shows homemade meals. One is a lunch box, a rice dish prepared by a Chinese participant using creole ingredients. The photo shows the meaning of 'creole' in the preparation of migrant food. The rice was made by using a mix of ingredients from the two cuisines, the Chinese and the British, and following the Chinese tradition of eating by balancing nutritional intake (i.e. a mix of fish, some vegetables, beef). The last photo is of handmade Vietnamese glutinous rice balls by my Vietnamese neighbour in Leeds. The photo conveys the message that reciprocating food creates bonds between people. Indeed, women use food to voice their existence to others and give visibility to their culture. As they set systems of food sharing, this extends and create networks outside the home.

These encounters directed my attention from verbalization to action with a switch on methods. This section has presented the women through the memories of places and foodies through my participation in their daily life. I now present the participant's profile.

6.4.5 Participants' profile

This section describes the participants of the research. I have organized a table with resumes of the women who have taken part in the interviews. Table 6.1, illustrates their profile.

Table 6.2 List of participants to the first phase of the research in chronological order

	Pseudo nymous	Country of origin	Time living in UK (in years)	Reason for moving to UK	Marital status	Children	Employment	Qualif ication	Where based in the UK
1	<i>Sandra</i>	Hong Kong	> 10	Study	Single	0	Unemployed	PhD	M*
2	<i>Maggie</i>	Hong Kong	15	Study	R/C*	0	Free-lance artist	MA	M
3	<i>Cynthia</i>	Hong Kong	> 10	Study	Single	0	Occupational therapist	BSc	M
4	<i>Donna</i>	Hong Kong	32	Study	Married	3	Unemployed	BA	M
5	<i>Helen</i>	Mainland China	15	Study	Married	0	Lecture	PhD	M
6	<i>Mary</i>	Mainland China	1	Family	R/C	2	Tui na ²⁴ Physiotherapist	BA	M
7	<i>Victoria</i>	Vietnam	4	Family	Married	2	Part-time cleaner	BA	Leeds
8	<i>Rachel</i>	Mainland China	5	Family	Married	2	Full time mother	BA	Leeds
9	<i>Emily</i>	Mainland China	7	Study	R/C	1	Research fellow	PhD	Leeds

Synopsis *R/C in a relationship, C cohabiting; E expecting a child; M Manchester

The women have diverse characteristics. They are aged between 28 and 51 years. Four women came from different provinces of mainland China, four were from Hong Kong and one from Vietnam. All the women were first-generation migrants. The time of relocation in the UK ranged from 1 to 32 years.

With respect to their decision regarding a temporary or permanent migration, Helen, Rachel and Victoria have a long-term plan to return to their countries and rejoin their families once they will retire and/or the children will be grown. On the other hand, Mary is looking forward to moving to another country sometimes in the future. Some of the other women were considering permanent stay, while few others were unsure about the future. Before settling in the UK, Mary and Rachel lived in other countries. Mary lived for 15 years in New Zealand and Rachel lived for 7 years in Sweden. Some of them also relocated in other places in the UK before settling in Manchester or Leeds.

²⁴Tui na massage, literally Tui (to push) and Na (to grasp) is a traditional manipulative body treatment from Chinese medicine.

The patterns of migration are different. The women of this study belong to two flows of migration: 1) working and middle-class women who migrated with their families; 2) autonomous migration from middle-class South-East Asian families (Campt and Thomas, 2008; Hoang, 2009) who arrived to the UK to study and/or enhance their professional skills and careers. Eventually, most of these women found a job and settled permanently, after undergoing problems with their resident permits. I briefly expand on these groups.

1) Family migration

The first group is composed of 3 women. Mary, Victoria and Rachel who followed their partners who are on a work VISA in the UK.

These women all have 2 children. Rachel had her children in Sweden, whilst Victoria came over with her children as a family. Mary has grown up children who have remained in China living with her ex-husband and his original family. Rachel and Victoria, whose children are still young, are stay-at-home mothers, although Victoria also works part-time. Mary is employed as a tuina physiotherapist in a traditional Chinese clinic in Chinatown. The women argued that their reasons for migrating were to reunite with their family, improve the family's financial position, as well as getting a good education for the children. The stories of migration are in a manner very diverse. The women come from wealthy families in their original countries. They had good paid jobs, whilst their husbands were teaching staff in local universities or businessmen. Victoria was employed in a bank, as she holds a degree in Economics, and Rachel worked for a Chinese import-export company and she was in a long-distance relationship for a few years before moving abroad with her husband.

In her original country, Victoria had a maid who took care of her children and home. However, when Rachel and Victoria eventually left their jobs to immigrate to the UK, they decided to remain at home as full-time mothers and housewives, while their husbands went to work. They hoped to return to employment once the children were older.

For Mary, the reason for coming to the UK was to follow her British partner. She was living in New Zealand with her son when she met her husband.

According to the literature of migration, a high percentage of women who migrate as a family are educated with university degrees (Kofman, 2000). The women in this group hold a BA degree obtained in their countries.

2) Autonomous migration

The second group are the emerging East Asian middle-class women who came to Europe to obtain higher qualifications and enhance their careers. International female students are a growing number of youths who travel as autonomous migrants and have very diversified social profiles (Pang, 1998).

In this study, the women are from East Asian megacities such as Hong Kong, Harbin and Shanghai. They started to migrate to Europe to study in the 90s'. However, the fast development of China has led to the UK other students from lesser known locations in more recent migration. Chinese wealthy migrants are a large part of the Chinese population abroad, in addition to the old picture of the economic diasporas of Chinese. The women are well educated at MA, BSc and Ph.D. levels and have acquired at least one of their qualifications in the UK.

Sandra and Cynthia are single, while Maggie and Emily live with their British partners. Donna and Helen are married to Chinese partners. Helen is in a long-distance relationship with her Chinese husband for 15 years. Helen, Sandra, Cynthia, and Maggie do not have children. The other women have between one to three children. Emily's grown-up child, from her former marriage, does not live with her in the UK but has remained in China with the father.

With regards to their employment, Helen is a senior lecturer and Emily is a research fellow Engineer. They both are employed at university. Sandra has been awarded her Ph.D. and she is looking for work. Donna is a stay-at-home mum, who left her job to care of her now grown-up children. She was helping her husband in the family take-away business. Maggie is a free-lance artist who has exhibited her work in many cities in the UK. Cynthia is an occupational therapist. Chow (1993) calls these women the 'elite', the Chinese educated women and those intellectual women who migrated abroad and work in prestigious careers. The profile of these women depicts a Chinese community abroad, which is very diversified rather than homogeneous.

All the women have their extended families abroad. Some of them also have a new family abroad. This clarifies how the phenomenon of reunification of South-East Asian families has worked in the UK for the women of this research, with some families reunited, some others who have split, and the phenomenon of the long-distance relationship.

The descriptions presented show a heterogeneous profile of the Chinese women in the UK, and are in part different from the literature. The Chinese women in this study, who split from their husbands, are not necessarily those who remained in the homeland to wait for them passively. Instead, the women divorced in their original countries, and some of them decided to come abroad as single women, to change their life. The women are not represented only as family bearers. The women are contributing to the family as mothers by sacrificing their careers, but are not giving up on their future.

The phenomenon of women migration needs to be clarified in light of those women who are still single. In general, these women are called 'leftover' in China, as they presumptively have passed the age for being considered suitable to be married (Ren, 2016). In relation to this, on the one hand the women who are single argued that whilst by coming abroad they were taking the risk of the social and cultural pressures from their original countries, on the other they felt freed from the original culture abroad to pursue their emancipation.

The resume above reinforces the idea of the heterogeneity of South-East Asian women with distinctive cultures and patterns of migration. The descriptions also illustrate how the women are active contributors in migration with their work. The following section describes the interview study.

6.4.6 Traditional food interviews

This section introduces the semi-structured rich interviews (Barbour, and Schostak, 2005). The official data-gathering started in June 2013, after the interview schedule was prepared. I started with four pilots of individual interviews with South-East Asian women based in Manchester and Leeds (UK). I conducted a total of 9 interviews until March 2015. The interviews were conducted in English. The women were tape-recorded for between 40-90 minutes and the recordings were transcribed in English (see a sample of transcription in the Appendix II).

I now describe the nature of the interviews, the questions utilized, and the interview structure. The interview had the following characteristics: 1) open and general questions; 2) based on the everyday life of women; and 3) emplaced nature of the interviews. I expand on these points below:

First, predetermined questions were used flexibly, being omitted, adapted or elaborated according to the individual context (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Open questions were preferred to create a narrative space and a comfortable environment for the respondents (Kvale, 2008) in order to allow relevant discourses to emerge. It is important to note that interviews began by telling the women that it was not essential to cover all the areas of the interview, and if they had particular experiences to share these would be privileged instead.

Second, questions were directed to the participants regarding their daily life (e.g. how did you get to know where to find your traditional food when you arrived here? Which Festivals do you observe here? See the Appendix I for the interview schedule).

Third, the interviews were held in different locations in Manchester and Leeds where I became more knowledgeable about the women's lives and foodways. Food framed any interview encounter. Cafeterias were more likely to be chosen for meeting. The other places were the university student's office, where tea and biscuits were always at hand, a university refectory, a British bar, the cafeteria at Manchester museum, a dining room in a Buddhist temple, the Chinese bakery in Chinatown, my kitchen, Debenhams cafeteria in the city centre, their home, and an office at Wai Yin Chinese society. In order to render these meetings more 'familiar' and relaxed, drinks and snacks were usually offered during the interview. The interview place was often chosen by the women, where they felt comfortable or was easy to meet.

Fourth, when conducting interviews notes were taken along with observations to encourage the spontaneity of occurring behaviours and settings, and result less intrusive experience. Sometimes, during the interviews, I informed the participants and asked their consent to note significant information. These notes were cultural anecdotes, recipes, customs and food practices mainly. Following the interview, notes concerning reflexive

thinking such as ideas, thoughts and impressions were written up. Hence, the notes consist of places and addresses where the women choose to meet up for the interview, history accounts and family information, tasting memories of food or drinks which I tried for the first time or the women have had during our encounters, foodstuff which I gifted to the women to reward them for their time in the interview, impressions about the communities which I visited and locations where the interviews were held. Notes were also taken with regards to the process of making contact, trust and credibility with the participants and the disclosing of prejudices which I dismantled as long as I spent time and learned about them. Notes were also helpful to record how the method worked through different experiences. The following section considers the ethics.

6.4.7 Advantages and limitations of traditional ethnographic methods

One of the advantages of traditional ethnographic food interviews is the richness of information that these methods can offer. The food interviews allowed the access to the private spheres of women's everyday life. Their accounts on the experiences of relocation granted a unique view of the intersectional aspects which have impacted on the women's life in the UK. Findings will be presented in Chapter 7, thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

However, there were some limitations in working with traditional methods on food and placemaking, which is why I chose to supplement the data with creative and sensorial ethnography. I briefly account them here. First, whilst food interviews offered the women a chance of talking richly about their relocation in Manchester, in undertaking the interviews it was difficult for women to solely focus on food practices. The accounts span over a spectrum of topics where food is related to other aspects of life (e.g. the theme 'cooking and gender' led onto the relations of power in the household; migrant's cooking and racial discrimination. Also, words could not always do justice to the women's everyday life, a life which I had not been part of. As I spoke a different language, it was not always possible to find the right translation for ordinary events or things (e.g. names of festivals, foods, dishes), especially when the same words were used to indicate different things (e.g. for Chinese people cakes are savoury, not sweet). I tried to avoid this by engaging in further study around Chinese culture. Some women felt they had to

showcase their answers and during the interviews, showed me photos on their mobile phones of dishes, ingredients which they used, and places where they went. They, also, emailed me some photos portraying Chinese foods, taken when they went out for shopping, or the meals which they ate. Others, clearly said how odd and novel it felt talking about their 'ordinary' routines. Their answers reflected mixed feelings: some resulted too short or dubious (e.g. Did you ask me about..?; Shall I talk about ...?), others were followed by a silence, or they deviated the question to some other topics. These were cues that the methodology needed to be revised. Pink et al. (2015), argue that people do not usually talk about domestic practices, nor have a reason for doing it. This is probably the reason why new approaches were required for the purpose. Latham and McCormack (2004), argue that the use of photos (and videos) grants the access to aspects of reality, which are not normally mentioned in interviews and observations. Pink et al. (2005), propose sensual mapping as a technique for getting people talking differently about domestic spaces and their meanings. For instance, in a research on domestic soundscapes sensual mapping elicited sensorial aspects which had not being discussed in the interviews (Tacchi, 1997). Indeed, sensorial mapping in this research was a useful tool which captured the realities about the embodied and sensorial life of women which were difficult to be spoken about.

Second, food interviews resulted in a challenge or were sometimes too intrusive for the Chinese women from the mainland, wherein their local culture does not approve sharing information about the family with outsiders. The women seemed cautious about sharing information regarding family life. Also, food related to their socio-economic status, which is something that not all the women may have been willing to share. This revealed food as a sensitive area of study, rather than a neutral topic. Moreover, talking about food left out the sensorial part embedded in the life of women. As Belasco (1999) argues, food is a 'trivialised topic', which indeed makes it easier to be done than talked about (Curtin, 1994). Some women doubted the purpose of the research, while others asked for the interview questions in advance because they were afraid that their English was not good enough. I aimed to minimise the imbalance of power in order to achieve cultural woman-to-woman encounters by paying attention to the sensual and material cues of these encounters from which I learned about their habits. The interviews progressively built

trust with the women and my position shifted within them. I used these interviews as a starting basis for further reflections on methods and positionality in the research. This will be presented in personal and methodological reflexivity (Chapter 11).

Third, fieldnotes are a conventional method useful to record aspects of what has been seen. However, it offers a one-dimensional (personal) and textual based description of reality (Pink, 2019b). In contrast, when fieldnotes were juxtaposed with sensorial and creative methods (as we will see in subsequent chapters), they contributed in representing reality as a tridimensional form (Pink 2006; Rose 2007).

Fourth, participant observation allows the researcher to directly observe how women live and do things, which complemented interviews and fieldnotes. Pink et al. (2015), note that whilst participant observation requires observation for an extended period of time and on daily basis, this is not always possible for the ethnographer since the access to certain spaces is denied (e.g. the home).

Sensorial and creative methods, can enable participants to talk about spaces like home transversally, which means that they can trace movements of people within these spaces through things/objects that are used, moved and transformed, without requiring the observer to necessarily invade people's privacy. By observing how people use and construct 'things' across different contexts and cultures, meanings of home are generated within a minimal interference by the researcher-ethnographer. Moreover, whilst participant observations are helpful to facilitate the researcher to merge into the community, they are strictly based on sight. Instead, creative and sensory ethnography record information through multi and different sensorial channels.

When I started fieldwork, I asked the women who agreed to be interviewed to talk about their foodways. The interviews resulted in rich accounts about their daily routines and stories of migrations. However, each time I left them, I had a feeling that something was missing. I realized that my fieldnotes said more about the sensorial essence of those encounters. The multisensorial and emplaced nature of the conversations, women's words which extended into gestures, the food consumed during our conversations, the

pathways which I walked to reach the venues around the city and places which I saw for the very first time after living for years in Manchester, were already a form of inquiry. I realised that words could not replace the concreteness of women's everyday life and its sensorial qualities which, instead, I found while sipping on a Chinese green tea with the women during our engagements.

Later, when I organized the interviews into thematic units, the richness of these sensual and embodied experiences seemed to be lost. It was not until my Vietnamese neighbour knocked on my door with some Bánh Cam, handmade sticky rice balls covered in sesame seeds, that I started to think more reflexively about my methodology. During the interview that she undertook in my kitchen, when she asked me to cook together (see the interview in Appendix II), she gave me the input to switch on other methods. Whilst cooking, we spontaneously began talking about her experience of relocation to the UK. Reflecting on that, I decided on other methods to complement the traditional ones. I explored a participatory-led approach (Bergold *and* Thomas, 2012; Stevenson, 2013, 2016) and decided to look into what creative and sensorial methodologies had to offer.

The creative and sensorial methods were a serendipitous discovery (Rivoal, and Salazar, 2013) from the observational fieldwork beside the interviews. I observed, learnt and reflected about the women's lives not only through their words, but also from their actions and the ordinary 'things' of our emplaced encounters. Furthermore, I transformed into fieldwork the situations occurring out of the research settings, through the demands of the women such as their request to cook, share foods, and meet. The research changed my position through spending time with the women, and indeed it became a piece of my story. Ethnographic research also helped us to physically, viscerally and materially cross the boundaries between the researched and researcher through accessing and creating domestic spaces. These were spaces of intimacy, like the home, which normally and ethically in research require the consent from the participants to be accessed. With the ethnographic method these were opened spontaneously for each other, which in the interviews remained closed, due to defensive embodied resistances on both sides due to our diverse cultures. At the end of this chapter, I present some photos that show the emplaced and material nature of the interview encounters. The photos were taken during the first phase of the research, whilst conducting the interviews

and/or finding and contacting the participants. They became a sort of collected memos or visual prompts that I firstly used in order to recall memories related to the notes which I took along my Ph.D. journey. The photos represent the paths which I have walked alone or with the women while going at our interview meeting places, hidden spaces in Manchester which I have discovered either by attending interviews than wandering around the communities, or whilst searching for the participants in these spaces. They also potray ordinary life moments that the women have documented and sent to me, and a variety of foods consumed during our interview encounters. The photos were taken as part of the observational fieldwork, whilst later they became an 'extention' of my fieldnotes. They reflect the research process, and how I first explored and moved towards other forms of ethnography.

In the following section, I recount the preparation method of the second phase of the research with creative and sensorial methodologies.

6.2 The second phase of the research

Creative approaches use a plethora of methods (photography, filmmaking, poetry, drawing etc.) to engage and study participants in an inquiry of practice. They are art-based methods aiming at understanding people's lives through their production of artifact. In this study, I have considered food practices as artistic performances.

Crafting, which characterizes these approaches, resembles the metaphor of a recipe. The metaphor of methodology as a recipe and, the 'assemblage' of methods come from innovative schemes that have been accepted by scholars working on interpretative and critical methodologies (Crotty, 1998).

A list of ingredients and procedures guides the practitioners to accomplish successful baking. Similarly, a creative methodological approach thoughtfully combines and utilises a range of methods (ingredients), which are theoretically consistent with the worldview of the researcher (chef), who implements them in line with each technique. However, creative approaches are also sufficiently open to the inputs and interpretations by those who are involved in the research. Pink and Mackley (2012), reject the idea of

methodology as a recipe. Ethnography, she explains, is a developing field of practice, or a 'learning by doing', and is more than a mere application of pre-given instructions and procedures. However, her idea is not necessarily in contrast with the metaphor of a recipe used in this research. A recipe, as I explain (see Chapter 10), is a creative performance (Schechner, 2017).

First, it improves through practice and knowledge gained in the fieldwork (i.e. kitchen). Thus, the recipe instructions alone do not guarantee a successful baking, although instructions are essential to minimize 'mistakes'. Second, it certainly differs from setting to setting (Taylor, 2003) and from who prepares the recipe. Likewise, a method is naturally subjected to the unpredictability of the setting, participants, instruments etc. and, like a recipe, it needs to be contextualised (*Sun and Fei, 2013*). Castillo (1992) argues that a recipe is a 'theory of possibilities'. The different versions of the same recipe, in her view, reflect the possibilities of hearing different voices within the same community. Similarly, a recipe method is about the possibilities of voicing the researchers' choices in the academic community. The recipe reflects '*...an original moment in the life story of the person who is preparing a recipe*' (Abarca, 2004: 3) likewise a method depends upon the researcher's journey when conducting a research. Third, recipes as artifact have multisensorial formats; they can be printed, hand written, pictorial, or oral. Sometimes individuals base them on their instincts or change them according to what is available. Recipes are always reinvented, reviewed and changed in the laboratory of life. They are not a standard procedure that we use to prepare a dish. They embody life memories rather than sole instructions. In the same way, I argue a recipe methodology is a reflexive and creative process which includes the ability and knowledge of the researcher, as well as inventiveness, ingenious, and adventurous spirit through which she reinterprets its tools and methods to engage with the experiences of people (Nicholls, 2009). I now turn to the advantages of working with creative methods.

6.5.1 The advantages of creative methods

There are advantages of working with creative methods that justify their use in this research. One, creative approaches are methodologies that critically 'entangle' the

complexity and contradictions of ordinary life. They are indeed 'real life' methods (McMahon et al., 2017; Morgan centre for Research into everyday life, 2017). Two, they require a degree of participation of the researcher in the life of individuals and communities. Three, as such they require a flexible interchange of tools and techniques to adapt to situational and interpersonal contexts (Pink, 2008). Four, the method is crafted with the participants, and not done to them. Five, they can account for serendipitous moments as creative moments. I now expand on the four points made above.

1. Creative methods are critical approaches

Creative approaches are multi-methods. Mason (2011), uses the metaphor of a cut of a gemstone that refracts lights, colours and opacity from its surfaces, to develop a 'facet methodology'. A 'facet methodology' entangles social inquiry through a multimethod approach, which allows a nuanced outlook into people's living ways and experiences. Owton (2017), uses the image of the researcher as an artist. She draws attention to the fact that a creative research practice can produce findings that are not accessible with conventional methods. The multi-method approach is a combination of methods, which the researcher attunes to her purposes, contexts and situations while balancing coherence and innovation (Kara, 2015). This perspective is far beyond the idea of the abstaining observant in traditional ethnography.

2. Engages the crafting of a method within the community

Creative methods generally involve people and some form of art (Kara, 2015). As such, they require the researcher to be in the community, since participants craft the method²⁵. The literature of apprenticeship adds value to the discourse of creative methods. The researcher first learns how to be a good apprentice from the informants by accessing these communities and participating in their life (Lave, 2011; Lawthom, 2012). While participating, the researcher manages the cultural differences with those of the community by practicing their culture and learning how to effectively function within it

²⁵Some examples of creative methods are arts-based research (e.g. visual arts, performance arts, textile arts), research using technology (e.g. social media, apps, computer/video games), mixed-method research (traditionally qual. plus quant., but also quant. plus quant. and qual. plus qual.), transformative research frameworks (e.g. participatory research, feminist research, decolonising methodologies, activist research).

(Jones, 2002). Pink (2008) argues that the real understanding of the slowness manifesto came in when she set into the 'community of practice' (Lave 2011; Wenger 2015) of residents in Mold (UK), who were adopting slowness as a philosophy and practice of life and by walking through the town and visiting sites that her informants had photographed. Communities of practice are a group of people who organize themselves through shared interests, and learn their skills through apprenticeship (Lave 2011; Lawthom, 2012; Wenger, 2015).

Seemingly, the 'communities' which I accessed could be considered as 'communities of practice', rather than being looked through the ethnic lens. I have participated in these 'communities' as an apprentice. I have learnt how to cook dishes and ate with the women, I have walked the places where the women did their shopping, I have celebrated their festivals and volunteered to organize them, and I have engaged with the women in creative activities. Knowing how the community works allows creativity to emerge. The method is negotiated and agreed within the community rather than being imposed upon them, which in return makes the purpose of the research clearer and acceptable to the participants. In addition, the community can redirect the method when it is not working.

I have applied two levels of my participation to the fieldwork: the researcher-observer as participant, and the participant researcher-observer. These work at a more complex level as compared to the participant observer in the classic ethnographic fieldwork. The first, the researcher-observer as participant, entails observing within participating. The second, the participant research-observer, could either observe or be observed by the participants. I switched between those positions within the same ethnographic fieldwork. Most importantly, these positions determined which action I was allowed to take, and how I negotiated and came to an agreement about the methods with participants. I share some examples. In Chapter 8, the banquet, I started as a full participant researcher-observer. The women and I organized a celebrative banquet where we prepared and shared our country foods. In that occasion, after asking their permission, I turned on my recorder on the table and 'forgot about it'. However, the recording includes an episode when the participants asked me about my personal experiences as a migrant in Manchester. On that occasion, we inverted our roles. Similarly, in chapter 10, the market,

I filmed a student and me doing the shopping. However, in various occasions the student took her own photos and even filmed me while shopping. The initial idea of conducting participant observation was co-piloted by the women and it turned into reflexive and participatory ethnographic work. This allowed me to utilize a great deal of sources and methods within my participation.

3. *'Making' as a creative practice*

Perceiving and acting are an indissoluble compound in the researcher's conduct and practice. After all, perceiving is a form of action. Parker (2004: 37), argues that a radical ethnographic exploration of a community must highlight and produce the contradictions that structure it. Following his argument, the researcher:

is always involved in some kind of 'action' even if they do not want to deliberately turn their research into action research.

Acting in social research requires creative practice, not only observing and reporting. An example of creative intervention comes from Hackett (2014). She conducted an ethnography in children's museums in the UK, as part of a larger educational project on museums as learning resources. Her work, which was initially commissioned to understand the experiences of families in the British museums, turned out to highlight the contradictions between the experience of children and the institutions regarding knowledge.

Specifically, she highlighted the differences between the learning views of adults, which determined how spaces in museums were organized, and the experiential forms that children used to learn in museums. Her creative approach combined fieldnotes, videofootage of children's movement, informal discussions of these videos with the parents, and mapping. She drew maps of the way in which the children, by running and walking in museums, constructed spaces and made it a place for their learning. The output was 'action research' which gave new inputs on how to make museums closer and relatable to these infant experiences, where children could engage with learning in sensorial and embodied ways.

Similarly, this research engages with different creative forms of action (e.g. cooking, shopping, eating), as well as it produces outputs, the tablographies, which change the way the women engage with place by creating social spaces of action and interaction.

4. Flexible interchange of tools and techniques to adapt to situational and interpersonal contexts

The creative approach maximizes the emerging spontaneity of everyday events and in different forms. In this research, I alternated moments where I was actively and radically crafting my method (Parker, 2004), with moments where I let the women lead it. The method in this study is, therefore, a process of reflexivity and working in compliance with the women's 'sensitivities', preferences and leadership. For instance, in Chapter 8, the banquet was a creative event proposed and developed with the women, which was arranged straight after they had met me for an interview. It responded to a desire contact with other foreigners and locals in Manchester. It also responded to their desire to switch the focus from the reliance on words and the experience of the interview, to 'making' something important to them. Indeed, I noticed that the women were responding better when sharing recipes, eating what everyone had cooked, wanting to learn Italian cooking, showing me special ingredients and talked fondly and passionately about what they were doing (these issues will be tackled in the analysis chapters 9 and 10). This affirmed our preference for creative methods.

5. They allow some space for serendipity

In this research, planning in advance was not possible. I rather grasped any chance that I got. Indeed, most part of this work could be considered to be the result of 'accidents' (Poulos, 2009) or serendipitous encounters (Rivoal, and Salazar, 2013; Fisher, J. 2017b). Serendipitous or accidental encounters are the unplanned encounters with the unexpected that the researcher is not expecting to find. It consists of recording events that are not under the control of the researcher, whilst including and considering the researcher a part of the 'accident'. As such, the ethnographer has to deal with the unknown and the messiness of the field, where deliberately crafting the method is not always a possibility. Rather, accidental or serendipitous ethnography considers reflecting, selecting and applying the appropriate method to capture the spontaneity of the 'event'

(Casey, 1996). Although, not all the serendipitous ethnographies are creative, the complexity of unplanned events leaves a space for a good dose of insight and inventiveness required to formulate the right decision over a method. I argue that serendipity is a component of creativity in this research.

In the present research, observations were agreed with the women based on their interests and motivations (i.e. as regards as food practices), and their consent to the research. However, fieldwork resulted as serendipitous life moments and the result of acquaintances (Fisher, J. 2017b) with the women that I encountered and shared time and interests together. I transformed these 'accidents' and informal networks into observational occasions. For instance, in chapter 9, the market, conducting a sensorial and embodied ethnography was a consequence of neighbourhood relationships (i.e. sharing our original country foods which was going on for over a month and since we met). Similarly, the banquet (Chapter 8), was the result of sharing photos via email of Italian food for the Christmas greetings to the women.

In this section, I have discussed the advantages of using creative methods in this thesis and shared a few examples of how the nature of the fieldwork and participants lead to the choice of these methods. In the rest of this chapter, I introduce how I venture into creative and sensorial methods in ethnographic fieldwork. I, also, outline the second phase of the study and recount sensorial methods used in this phase of the research.

6.5.2 Design of the study in the second phase of the research

The second phase of the research extends the first. Its purpose is to look in depth into concrete practices and experiences of women, which could not be fully investigated through the interviews. I have employed creative and sensorial methods to explore place-making of South-East Asian women living in the UK. I have undertaken two sensual ethnographies, the banquet (Chapter 8) and the market (Chapter 9), with 5 women conducting activities such as eating, cooking, celebrating festivals, sharing foods, and shopping in public and semi public spaces. Three women, amongst those who undertook the interview in the first phase of the research, who took part in the second phase of the

study, while 2 were recruited later. Table 7.1 illustrates the characteristics of those participants who only took part in the second phase of the research. The other 3 women have already been presented in Chapter 6 table 6.1.

Table 6.3 List of participants to the second phase of the research

Women Pseudonymous	Country of origin	Years in the UK	Marital status	Occupation	Children	Qualification	City based
Katherine	Bangladesh	>10	Married	Lecture	2	PhD	M*
Amelia	Mainland China	4	R*	Student	0	BA	Leeds

Synopsis: R: in a relationship; M: Manchester.

Videos were recorded using a digital camera. One ethnography was undertaken in Manchester, where I was studying and where I had developed a good network during my first experience in the fieldwork. The other, was conducted in Leeds where at that time I was living. Here, I present a table which resumes the ethnographic work in this second phase of the research and the women who participated to it.

Table 6.4 UK-based sensory ethnographies

Ethnographic settings	Pseudonymous	Food practices	Living place	Method/s	Timing
The banquet	Helen Maggie Mary Katherine	celebrating eating cooking	Manchester	Photos; Unstructured interviews; Participant observation; Fieldnotes	4 h
The market	Amelie	shopping	Leeds	Video-tour; Photos Fieldnotes	3 h

In the second phase of the study, the recruitment of women was been carried out through personal contacts and contacts from my neighbourhood, as at that stage I was trusted as a member of the community. Moreover, as my living conditions had become more stable at that time, since I had settled in Leeds, it was easier to commit long term as a member of the community. Indeed, the recruitment in this second phase resulted a smooth process compared to the first phase. Some of the research encounters, and the ethnographies which were followed, were most serendipitous.

Additionally, as the methodology became more creative and participatory, the women felt more power over the research process and their participation into the study. Some of the women were part of my everyday network as neighbours and friends, while the others became familiar with each other through the first phase of the research. Three women who had participated in the first study chose to take part to the second as well. Participating and volunteering at social events organized by some communities in the North of England and Manchester, such as the organization of Chinese New Year, was also helpful as I was able to built new networks and got to know more about their culture.

To titillate your taste buds, I present the method as an ethnographic ‘meze’²⁶, where I have blended different flavours of ethnographies with more observational methods. Ethnographic methods account for visual (Pink, 2008, 2012; Anzoi et al., 2017) and sensory ethnography (Basso, 1996; Marte, 2007, 2012; Pink, 2008, 2019b), video-ethnography (Pink, 2001, 2007), walking interviews (DeCerteau, 1993; Ingold, 2004; Zakariya and Ware, 2010; Stevenson, 2016), and phenomenological mapping (Marte, 2007; Low, 1996, 2014; Hackett, 2014). Traditional methods are participant observation (Demunck and Sobo 1998; Mazumdar, et al. 1998), interviews (Bryman 2001; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011) and fieldnotes (Kara, 2015). In Chapter 6, I have explained the traditional methods used in the study.

Sensory methods are presented in the following section. Innovative sensorial methods employed in this research include: audio-video and visual methods, walking interviews and phenomenological mapping. I now turn to sensory ethnography.

6.5.3 Sensory ethnography

Sensory ethnography, is a critical and technologically-driven methodology, which is finding increasing appreciation from scholars embracing the ‘sensorial turn’ (Howes, 2003), the anthropology of the senses (Howes 1991; Classen, 1997), sensuous geography (Rodaway, 1994), sociology of the senses (Simmel 1912; Low, K. E. Y. 2013) and many other disciplines. More than a method, sensory ethnography is a reflexive and

²⁶Meze by definition is a plate of appetizers. In Mediterranean cuisines, meze is a display of ingredients and foods that itself becomes a meal.

experiential process (Pink, 2012; Pink and Mackley, 2012) that includes everyday life as research. The method was initiated by Pink and Mackley (2012) whilst investigating the domestic energy consumption of energy in English homes. Through collaborative home video-tours, Pink and Mackley (2012) moved around the house and looked at the sensory decision-making made by the owners. They interrogated how domestic practices, amongst which the consumption of energetic sources, made people's homes 'feel right' through visual, olfaction and touch cues.

The sensory ethnographer understands and locates ethnographic practice through the senses, with the use of digital technologies and the production of embodied knowledge. As such, the ethnographer enters the fieldwork by merging into the life of the people to fully develop a sensorial understanding of it. When Bendiner-Viani (2005), went to live in Prospect Heights, a district of Brooklyn, New York, the local places started to become meaningful for him only after a while. He reflexively thought about the stories of his life and family embedded in these locations that appeared insignificant before. Thereafter, he employed sensorial guided tours with some of the residents. The tours consisted of neighbourhood walking and using photos to document the ordinary 'things' to which people give little reflection and to see how these are important to construct their sense of place and how they feel in public spaces. The residents have considered sensorial and affective qualities of local markets, supermarkets, parks and buildings and have shown how dwelling is home bounded through the practices of everyday life in these places.

Whilst the ethnographer voices these experiences, she also acknowledges her participation in crafting these experiences (Pink, 2009a). Although sensory ethnographers work with a selection of methods, typically visual, the output of sensory ethnography is not representational. Rather, the researcher looks through these (visual and non-visual) information which elicit different sensual experiences, and which would be impossible to compare and collate together (Pink, 2008). However, the diversity of the information helps the researcher to revive and retrieve her direct experience of the fieldwork (Pink, 2008).

Sensory ethnography does not end once that the ethnographer leaves the fieldwork. It is, rather, an interactional and intellectual activity. As additional feelings arise, analysis is repeated while going through the information-data, or when rehearsing memories, knowledge and practices from the fieldwork (Pink, 2008). Similar to analysis, the selection of methods employed is a reflexive process. Pink and Mackley (2012) use the expression 'biography of method', a research step whereas the researcher recalls previously 'experienced' methods and reflects upon their re-contextualization in a new contexts. Sensory ethnographers select pre-used methods from previous fieldwork, and transfer, refine and readapt them in the new research context (Pink, 2007; Pink and Mackley, 2012).

Drawing from the work of Pink (2008), I have used sensory ethnography as a libratory research practice for approaching different fieldworks. I worked essentially with a cluster of methods that I have assembled each time while reflecting and trying to tackle the challenging and diverse experiences of the women (Heldke, 1992; Edge et al, 2013). Sensory methods also respond well to the phenomenology of the contemporary migrant, who travels back and forth between different places. As a migrant myself, this approach mirrors the ongoing research and construction of my sense of place through an assemblage of sensorial experiences, places, customs, and routes.

Here below, I am listing the methods utilized.

a) Sensory methods:

1. Visual ethnography
2. Walking ethnography

b) Phenomenological mapping

The visual ethnographic information is in the form of photos, recording of the material, sensorial and social aspect of the encounters. The videos rehearse memories of the pathways and places where I have lived, and the sensorial of that environments. The

fieldnotes, recorded after every fieldwork encounter, are jotted impressions regarding the research process, and rehearse memories and information that I had forgotten.

Sensory ethnography has proved to be a good method when studying food, as it better entangles the multisensorial dimensions of life and the human processes embedded in food practices such as remembering, imagining, cooking and eating. In the following section, I describe the visual methodologies.

6.5.4 Visual methodologies: photos and videos, and walking interviews

In this section, I illustrate the visual methodologies employed in this study. These are photos and videos ethnographies, and walking interviews.

a) Visual ethnography: photos and videos

Visual ethnography employs visual data and representations in ethnography, such as photographs and videos, but also mapping tours, You Tube videos, films, and advertisements (Banks, 2001; Emmel and Clark, 2011). In this section, I briefly discuss the potential of visual images in ethnographic research.

Scholars are developing new ways of using photographs in ethnographic research, both as tools of research and data and in combination with other methods (Adey, 2001). Photos encourage talking about experiences, which could not be articulated otherwise. If combined with interview techniques (Runswick-Cole, 2011), photos could enhance participation and enable marginalised voices to speak (Marte, 2007, 2012).

Since digitalization has encouraged to think about photos as separated from the devices with which they are taken (Edwards, 2005; Rose, 2007, 2012), photos have been studied beyond their representational functions, but as objects with which people do something (Rose, 2012). In this respect, visual methods can be creative other than sensory, since they produce artifacts. Ethnographers consider photos 'things as data' (Sheridan and Chamberlain, 2011) or objects which increase the power of the narrative beyond their representations (Edwards, 2005; Rose, 2012). Rose (2012), argues that everyday viewing of photos can create a sense of home. She particularly differentiates the use of photos as a text (e.g. their representations of family life) from photo referentiality. The latter is the

evocative power of photos that stretch to and articulate connections with urban space, as well as with people, places and time beyond the home.

This study follows these new research trends, and utilizes photos in conversation with other methods, such as sensory ethnography, audio-recorded conversations, fieldnotes and mapping video-tours to explore everyday experiences of place-making of the migrant women. For instance, in Chapter 8, The Banquet, I use the photos portraying the material settings of women's commensality, to look at how they construct Manchester as their home through their gustatory experiences. Moreover, photos have the advantage of showing ordinary aspects of life which are undermined in academic research. However, similarly to Marte (2012), taking the photos is juxtaposed to other performances such as chatting, eating, sharing recipes and foodwork around the tables. However, beyond the representational use of photo, *photographing* in this in this ethnographic work is part of the way the women and I craft place as an ongoing sensorial event, rather than a visual product (ie. the photo). *Photographing* is 'a performance in the performance' (Schechner, 2017), so that taking photos of the banquet is among the others a performance in the flow of the sensorial events throughout place is built. Likewise Rose (2012), photos are seen as artcrafts, and as such I distinguish their representations (e.g. tables with food) from their referentiality. Photos are embedded in the sensual and embodied experience of the banquet and stress connections with the contexts where women attend their every day life outside this setting, as well as with the places they have left behind along with their journey.

Marte (2007, 2012) utilizes photos and drawings to explore participants' activity in the city of New York. Her foodmaps identify a system of pathways and locations that illustrate how people move and make New York their own home. Differently, in this thesis, mapping did not have topological, referential, iconographic or linguistic resemblances to Manchester. Instead, they evoke the city in more sensual, affective and symbolic ways. In Chapter 9, The Market, photos are used with video-tours in a market in Leeds, where a student and I did the shopping. Photos, here, work as a recollection of memories, ingredients and locations which help forming a sort of affective map linking the student to places and family abroad.

b) Walking interviews

Walking interviews are innovative methods, ideal for the exploration of people's relationships with the spaces and places that they inhabit (Stevenson, 2016). These are performative interviews that mean beyond what it is said. Walking interviews are matched with multimodal techniques such as videos, photos and sensory ethnographic work. According to Pink (2008), video-recorded walking interviews create place through multisensorial experiences and collaborative productions (audio and video representations of place and space), which are shared between the interviewer and the researcher. In a walking-study, Pink (2008) focused on what she calls the 'constitutive places' or the researcher and the participant creating embodied sensorial maps through their routes, memories and senses of everyday routines. The intersubjectivity at play in these emplaced encounters gives a chance to imagine the other's emplacement, as well as to understand the researcher's life through the eyes of the others.

A walking interview has been employed in Chapter 9, The Market, where I have walked along with a student doing her shopping in the open market in Leeds, and invited questions and conversations in response to place. I now turn to phenomenological mapping.

6.5.5 Phenomenological mapping

The idea of cognitive map stems from cognitive representational psychology. In traditional psychology and neuro-science (Siegel, 2013), cognitive maps were conceptualised as learned responses of animals' interactions with the environment (Tolman, 1948). The schools of cognitivism and connectionism referred to them as mental shortcuts for behavioural efficiency. Similarly, some cognitivist scholars state that individual's mental maps are pre-existent schemas that apply to the outside world for individual's orientation. However, this alignment between mental maps and cartographies is rather contested (Tuan, 1979; Farinelli, 2009).

Cognitive maps have been problematized, in human geography and critical psychology, for their emphasis on the "cognitive" aspect of mind and their "natural" association with cartographies (Kitchin et al., 2013). These cognitive maps are formed as long as

individuals move in the world, and within their interaction with the world (Ingold, 2000), rather than being innate. Despite the fact that space and place are designed and planned in the Euclidean perspective, individuals disassemble these standardized regions of the world to create new spatial experiences. Nowadays, the concept of map has been critically rethought in a number of disciplines and has been further elaborated and assessed as a methodological tool for research. Furthermore, to avoid any confusion, scholars distinguish maps (cartographies) as a form of representation from the revolutionary idea of mapping. Mapping does not enclose individuals into a geometry of space, it emphasizes an ongoing production of space through multi-trajectories undertaken by the individuals.

Phenomenological mapping is a research tool that was adapted to the study of place-making. The concept of cognitive map in the 90's was, indeed, was a brief attempt to apply cognitive representational psychology to place theory. Phenomenological mapping refers to maps as performative and sensorial responses of humans to their environments. Ingold (2000) argues that human orientation entails far more sensitive capacities, such as survival instinct, walking, touching and smelling etc., and mind processes are always emplaced processes.

Phenomenological mapping has received great appreciation either in clinical and research areas. Giesecking (2013), argues that 'mental maps' are visual and spatial qualitative methods. Through the use of the graphic icons and symbols, these maps allow for the exploration of contexts of how people experience human relations, spaces and places which would otherwise remain unexpressed (Giesecking, 2013). This method has been applied successfully in psychotherapy sessions (Gabb, 2008). Gabb and Singh (2015) employed this method to study everyday family relations. They used 'emotion maps' with children to assess and design changes in family relationships at home and how events and emotions can be perceived. Phenomenological mapping is also used by clinicians and researchers to elicit verbal information during an interview (Kara, 2015). Finally, it has also been used along with focus groups and/or ethnography (Giesecking, 2013). According to Emmel (2008), social mapping is a 'real life method' and a graphic participatory method used in social science. It requires participants to sketch their own maps through their knowledge, understanding and insight of the places they inhabit. As pre-verbal, this

method is based on graphic compositions, either made by hands or computer-assisted (sketches, drafts, drawings, and diagrams). They represent place in ways that people see, imagine and desire it. It is also possible that participants work on a pre-existent map to change, decompose and reconstruct it to some extent.

There are fascinating applications and studies of this method in anthropological research with indigenous mapping. Brazilian Indian of the Amazon Region were involved in a tutoring class on conventions of maps (e.g. scale, distance, orientation, point of view, orientation) for reviewing the boundaries of their land, controlled and marked by the federal government (Araujo de Almeida, 1999). The Indians evaluated these maps as incomplete representations of their space. They realized creative artistic maps, which included historical landmarks, symbols, colours, science, magic, knowledge, intuition, fact and fiction closer to their everyday experience of space and place. In this research, phenomenological mapping has been employed to assess how participants construct place from the perspective of the researcher as a participant of the ethnographic sessions. The following section describes the advantages of working with creative and sensorial methodologies.

6.3 Extending into creative and sensorial methods

Sensorial and creative methodologies proved to be a better form of inquiry, as compared to the interview questions. They allowed me to engage with the participants' daily practices in different locations, like semi-public spaces and open markets (Heldke, 1992). These are locations where the women spend their lives and construct their bonds to place. The map of my data stories shows how traditional ethnographic methods used in the first phase of the research extended into cooking, sharing foods, shopping and other daily food practices (Curtin and Heldke, 1992). In the literature, the idea of food practices as methods is not new. DeCerteau (1984), conducted social enquiry of everyday life through 'ways of operating' (e.g. eating, walking, tasting and touching). Heldke (1992) argued that cooking is an anti-essentialist feminist inquiry, which combines the theoretical with the practical and endorses a participatory activity in research. In this study, I argue that food practices are useful tools (methods) for exploring place-making.

A combination of methods uses the strengths that each of these methods have, rather than merely following the logic of standardised practice, which argues for their separateness. The potential of learning through fieldwork is the result of intuition and common sense in selecting and combining the methods. In this case, I followed the maxim “necessity is the mother of invention”, as I let the participants and the nature of the fieldwork lead the creation of my methodology. In the next section, I present my contribution to methods, the tablographies.

6.4 My contribution to methods: tablographies

I have employed phenomenological mapping as a method of analysis of place and place-making. Here I briefly explain the method and describe my contribution to sensorial methods. I will present the method in detail in Chapter 9, The Banquet. The method is constructed within the narration of events. The story of the banquet accounts how the migrant women and I constructed Manchester as a tasting place, while chatting and eating food. However, phenomenological mapping steps further into another level. In particular, the map of Manchester is not drawn on a paper. Tables of foods are the focus for the development of my methodological approach to place-making. They work as a magnifying glass to look into the sensorial and practical realm of everyday ‘household’²⁷ life of migrant women and their attachment and creation of places in a host country.

The photos of tables account for a different quality of maps and mapping activity. I have named those tablographies. Distinguishable from the iconographical representation of place in cartographies, tablographies are a sensorial-driven construction of Manchester that takes its meanings from the material culture of food, as well as from the memories, emotions and nostalgia of places that eating and cooking food evoke. Tablographies are emplaced and embodied forms of doing or ‘sensual graphics’ of women. They are ‘sketched out’ through looking at setting tables of food. However, whilst resulting a (photo) graphic representation, they elude the stasis of images since they are *performing*. I juxtapose these performances to other performances (i.e. or methods) such as tasting food, the sharing of recipes and menus, fieldnotes and discussions. This gives to the

²⁷The household space to which I refer here is the potential of stretching out to the public through food activities that the women perform. I investigate how this happens and how the women domesticate public spaces through ‘household’ performances.

sensorial maps a consistency, as they provide the way the women look and make place through different lens and sensorial. Tablographies do not have a visual function (they do not represent), but a multisensory function. They are products elicited by relations, doing and the sensorial that makes them a place (alternative to maps).

This method builds on different methodologies. First, sensorial ethnographic work on place-making, which uses sensorial mapping and sees place in more imaginative and experiential ways (Stevenson, 2016). Second, creative methodologies, which use crafting as a way to explore individual's experiences. It is also inspired by a diverse literature. The work from anthropology of material culture and food anthropology, since it looks at the way the women use ordinary things and combines them to give meanings to space (Marte, 2007, 2012). The phenomenological mapping, and in particular the indigenous 'representations' of space, which embody a decolonised model of space through different sensorial experiences. Tablographies are my personal contribution to sensory and creative methodologies, as they entangle the sensorial constitution of place, while crafting it through eating and preparing food tables. The section which follows presents a summary of the (multi)methods employed in the ethnographic work.

6.8 A summary of the (multi) methods

A short summary outlines the multi-methods used in different stories. In Chapter 8, the banquet, I juxtapose visual and sensorial methods, such as photos and eating, with texts in forms of discussions, recipes, and fieldnotes. I have also employed phenomenological mapping as explained above. These different forms of inquiry record how the women and I craft Manchester as a tasting place. The photos portray the material and sensorial aspects of these celebrations. The use of that materiality as well as eating foods generate sensorial and embodied experiences of place. Discussions are audio-recorded, and soundtrack replete with voices, sounds and noises, contributes to a sensorial and emotional reading of the texts. Recipes are embodied and sensorial knowledge of everyday cooking from the emplaced memories of childhood. Fieldnotes are my lived and embodied experiences of the fieldwork and are subjected to temporal and personal revising. These methods record experience on a different intensity, and use sensorial

different channels to emphasize place as a sensorial construction. In Chapter 9, at the open market, the participant marks locations, stalls and shops significant for her. Here, I have combined videos and photography with shopping. Walking interviews allow access into the world of the participant through walking alongside and listening to her, and living emotionally and through her culture sensorium her story. At the same time, photography sheds light on the reflexive process of ethnography. I see myself as a constituent part of Leeds as it is our home. The following section presents the ethics of this research.

6.9 Ethics

The research project, information sheet and consent form were reviewed by the MMU Faculty Academic Ethics Committee and received approval before beginning the research. The ethics of this research were informed by the ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Society (2010). The participants were informed of the aims of the study and the use of data to enable them to stay in control of their participation. An information sheet and a data protection consent form were provided prior to the interview (see the Appendix II). Some of the women signed the form allowing me to quote their transcripts as public documents. For others, interpersonal 'trust' was based on the 'word' or word-of-mouth recommendations (Sweeney et al., 2008). My impression was that some women feared the consent form, due to the legal nature of their commitment to the research, and it impaired the research relationship if presented at the beginning of the interview. Therefore, I made sure they could receive it before the interview by sending it via mail, thus leaving them time to make a decision about consent.

According to the ASA (Association of Social Anthropologists, 2011), consent should not be limited to a single event, but is an ongoing process in research, and researchers should always check back to verify the position of participants to the research. For this reason, a copy of the transcription, along with the audio recording, was sent to each participant to allow them to retract or change their statements and consent. Sharing data with participants was important to create communal ownership of the research (Darou et al., 1993). Overall, the women were satisfied with the interviews and the transcripts and they

agreed to be informed about the progress of the research. Some of them, having listened to her recording, sent me back the transcription with the missing words filled in. This, and other gestures of appreciation revealed that trusting relationships were in place. Confidentiality and anonymity were protected through the use of pseudonyms²⁸. A confidentiality issue was raised by one respondent, therefore five minutes of her interview (Code: 04) was deleted on request.

The interviews yielded a particular form of data (Chapter 7). The issues for women finding it difficult to talk about food led to the use of more creative and sensorial methods. An addendum was made to the ethical approval to allow visual images and videos to be added.

As regards to visual methodologies, in the second phase, the maintenance of privacy (Clark et al., 2003) was kept in the following ways. First, photos and videos were used to show actions (hands), materiality and the environments, rather than the women. For instance, in Chapter 9 (The market) the photos portray hands 'at work', foodstuff and the various locations of the market. Where the women accidentally appeared in the photos faces were cut out to hide their identity. The videos were never posted on line. Second, as regards to respecting their privacy, the ethnographies were conducted in (semi)public spaces, which minimized the discomfort of invading their home, although they kept these spaces open to me. I regularly asked and received consent before starting to record. The risk of harm of using media to film their lives during these encounters was also minimized when women engaged with the research methods as co-researchers (Kagan, and Duggan, 2011) and filmed and photographed me as well²⁹. I was, therefore, always conscious about the effects of surveillance created by the media on my own life, and worked to balance my work in ethical ways. This meant avoiding taking their faces or making decisions about what was appropriate filming and/or taking photos in some circumstances, even if at the expenses of the richness of the data and in order to preserve the research integrity. An example could be found in Chapter 9 (The Market) where I turned my camera towards the ground, whilst Chapter 8 (The Banquet) purposively shows tables of foods without the attending women's faces.

²⁸ Pseudonyms are chosen through BabyNameVoyager program.
<http://www.babynamewizard.com/voyager#prefix=andsw=bothandexact=false>

²⁹ This is not presented in the research, as it was only occasional.

My research conduct was inspired by the feminist principles of reciprocity (Noddings, 1984) and nurtured relationships (Porter, 1999), which consider 'affective' relationships between women as normative. Women chose both the location and time of the meetings. I agreed to conduct and record interviews in busy, noisy places which the participants found more comfortable, even though this affected the quality of the audio recording. I always offered drinks and snacks during our meetings to compensate the participants for their time, gifted some Italian food in return for interviews, reciprocate their help by lending them a hand in household activities (i.e. borrowed my shopping trolley for the shopping; cleared up the tables), and occasionally cooked for them some homemade Italian food, which unexpectedly raised their interest and participation in this research. I also provided useful contacts to help one participant enhance her working network. However, these 'exchanges' and treats were not expected by the women, and were always returned back. For instance, some of them wanted to buy me a drink or Chinese cakes, and with one participant in particular paying became nearly an offense while negotiating our positionalities. I was rewarded as 'the student in need'.

According to Hammersley and Trainanou (2014), maintaining research reciprocity has its limits. The primary target in the research is gathering data, which generates a gap between giving and taking in research. What the women gave me could not always be reciprocated. The interviews required the women to commit precious time, as sometimes they were even conducted in the late evening after work. My offer of food in return, responded to my anxiety about leaving participants with nothing after the interview, when indeed not all of them were expecting something in return or interpreted reciprocity in the same way as I did. A context of care in research demands some interpretation or assumptions about women's expectations in relation to the research relationship (Duncombe, and Jessop, 2013). These interpretations could be biased and need to be reflected upon (i.e. different cultural values; assumptions about participants' financial position and needs; their expectations from the study). My idea of reciprocity in research relationships was different to those of the women I interviewed.

Interestingly, solidarity between autonomous migrant women was one the main reasons why most women agreed to participate in an interview with me. The women were 'maternal' towards me (Walker, 1983, 2018; Hill Collins, 1991) and supportive of my

studies. When Helen told me *'I will help you with your studies'* (comment from fieldnotes) I realized that the women agreed to the interviews not only because we were sharing the same journey, but their participation was a pact of solidarity between a community of women who were also students at university and/or were building their careers in a foreign country.

Another reason that explain why some women participated in the second phase of the research is the concept of 'marketing strategy' (Sweeney et al., 2008). This is a useful concept to try to understand the contribution of the women at the banquet. Some of the women 'took advantage' from the research study to expand their networking relationships by meeting other women and promoting themselves as professionals. From what I have experienced during my time in China, these 'marketing relationships' are very common in the Chinese society. They are based on the Confucian idea of 'Guanxi', or social business relationships, which implies making connections through implicit mutual obligations, reciprocity, and trust, in order to maintain a social and hierarchical position in the society. This usually happens in commensal situations whilst sharing a meal, or in 'social drinking' occasions. These business connections work effectively because they are established through word of mouth and credibility is given to the members of the same group, also due to the sharing of the same cultural values. Indeed, The Banquet (Chapter 8) was also a place where the women built networks useful for their jobs.

Moreover, since ethnography produces 'thick descriptions of reality' (Geertz, 1973), reciprocity (and serendipity) of these ethnographic sets reduced the risk of objectification. My personal experience as a migrant woman to the UK and later to China (see Chapter 11) plays a big part in how things are interpreted in this research. Therefore, the ethnographic works in Chapter 8 and 9 have a reflexive tune that mirrors these experiences as a White woman who acknowledges her privileged position in migration. Following this chapter, some photos that show the context of these reciprocal encounters will be presented. The next Chapter 7 will outline the findings of thematic analysis.



Fig. 6.2 Wong Wong Chinese Bakery, Chinatown, Manchester.
Photo by author.



Fig. 6.3 Chinese mooncakes at the entrance of the Wong Wong Chinese bakery.
Photo by author.



Fig. 6.4 Coconut Soya drink. Photo by author.
Waiting for a participant at the Wong Wong Chinese
bakery in Chinatown.



Fig. 6.5 Hong Kong creamy bun spread with coconut powder.
Photo by author



Fig. 6.6 Interview room at Fo Guang Shan Buddhist temple, Manchester.
Photo by author.



Fig.6.7 Fo Guang Shan, Buddhist temple in Manchester.
Visiting the temple with a participant. Photo by author.



Fig. 6.8 Chinese supermarket, Manchester.
A rainy day after an interview. Photo by author.



Fig. 6.9 Chinatown, Manchester.
The roads I have walked in search of participants. Photo by author.



Fig. 6.10 What I have done today: affogato al caffè (coffee with ice cream).
Photo taken by a participant.



Fig. 6.11 Today's lunch. Burger and chips.
Photo taken by a participant.



Fig. 6.12 Chinese almonds biscuits.
Shortcut from the internet taken by a participant.



Fig. 6.13 Boxed lunch. Rice seasoned with chilli con carne, red beans, cod fish, vegetables and wine.
Photo by author.



Fig. 6.14 Maggie's 'duck in donuts'.
Photo by author.



Fig. 6.15 Vietnamese homemade glutinous rice balls covered with sesame and filled with imported sugar cane from my Vietnamese neighbour. Photo by author.

Chapter 7

Thematic Analysis

This chapter presents the thematic analysis (TA) (Braun and Clark, 2006) employed for the analysis of the interviews. First, it outlines the textual analysis and coding of the interviews. Second, it discusses the four most relevant themes which emerged from the analysis: home country, creolization (Cohen, 2007, 2013; Howes, 1996), host country and exclusion. These themes are representative of the relocation of South-East Asian women in the UK and reflect the link between migration, belonging and place, and food.

8.1 Textual analysis and coding

This section will present the analysis drawn from the transcripts of 9 semi-structured interviews conducted in the UK with Chinese, Hong Kongese and Vietnamese women. I used an inductive thematic analysis (Thomas, 2006) based on Braun and Clark (2006). In detail, the interview transcripts were read repeatedly to identify the major themes. From listening to the audiotapes and during the transcription process, notes were taken at the margins (i.e. impressions, reflections, connection with the literature, contradictory statements). The text was explored by looking at different units of analysis, sections (i.e. answers) and words. For answers, either sentences or words were extracted from the text to explain the content, or one or more labels were chosen to summarize the content. Word repetitions were considered as recurrent themes significant for the respondent (e.g. 'home' referred to the original country).

The open coding generated a number of codes, which were progressively reduced to eliminate redundancy. Redundancy was useful to detect the significant topics and similarities between the interviews. The codes were first organized in a diagram (i.e. brainstorming). Progressively, they were grouped into categories, also according to the literature, which were then labelled to identify the themes (i.e. enculturation, acculturation, embodiment, food and class, home country, host country, creolization, cooking and gender roles). The labels were chosen also according to words that returned frequently across the interviews (i.e. 'home'). Themes were then connected together (i.e.

Axial coding) (Braun and Clark, 2006) and relations between noteworthy information were found and are presented in this chapter.

Below, I have provided a description of four themes from the large data set, which I consider most relevant for this thesis: affordability, creolization, home country and exclusion. The first theme, affordability, illustrates disruptions of migration in the everyday life of women in the UK and the strategies adopted to overcome these. The second theme, creolization, focuses on the agency of women in adapting, adjusting, fitting and/or negotiating their habits in between the home and the host country. The third theme, home country, considers how women retain and preserve their original food practices in order to maintain contacts with family and their link with the local culture. The fourth theme, exclusion, focuses on the suspicious glances and discrimination that the women's food performances attracted in the UK. Findings are reported through quotes and the interpretation is given at a semantic and explicit level (Brown and Clark, 2006). The themes confirmed some findings in the literature, while some of them required further elaboration for example, through the employment of creative and sensorial methods novel meanings of creole (e.g. food practices) have been explored (see ethnographies in Chapters 8 and 9). The four themes are now presented in further detail.

8.1.1 Theme 1: Affordability

Findings from this thematic analysis show that consuming traditional food is crucial for South-East Asian women in the UK. The women retain their food habits in order to keep healthy, preserve their traditions, relieve homesickness and loneliness, and break the isolation due to the loss of relationships that comes along with migration.

The focus of this theme is the disruptions around food that women encounter in their everyday life that make an impact on women's health and well-being, with the most critical issue being the affordability of food. These disruptions especially impact on the life of the most vulnerable women (i.e. the autonomous migrant women). The theme also describes some of the adjustments adopted by the women in reaction to these disruptions. Briefly, the disruptions encountered by the women were the following: cost of food and transport for reaching out retailers who sell traditional food, limited choice,

and poor quality and 'authenticity' of food. Whilst this section will focus on the aforementioned issues, other disruptions due to relocation that the women faced are: not mastering cooking skills, not having the time to cook, language barriers, and poor representation of their culture (e.g. the cuisine in Asian restaurants). These will be explained in the second theme, creolization. Other disruptions like the lack of family support and the fragmentation of the community led the women to feel homesick and isolated. These will be presented in the third theme, home country. Finally, the fourth theme, exclusion, will report the discriminations faced when women perform their food practices abroad.

The women who lived in Manchester mostly felt satisfied with living in this city. The level of satisfaction depended upon the access to services and spaces designated to the community for growing and preserving their culture (i.e. restaurants and takeaways, open markets, shops and grocers and a designed Chinatown). The accounts of the women living in Leeds were more critical in relation to the facilities. In general, the Asian communities in Leeds depended on retailers and restaurants located around in the city. The women noted that having the choice of eating traditional foods renders relocation easier and makes the place feel more hospitable (Plaza, 2014). The women who lived in Manchester for more than ten years compared their present life to when they arrived. At that time, it was very difficult finding their ingredients. With the advance of globalisation and the enhanced chances of migration, things changed and the women were pleased to find a range of their traditional foods displayed in local supermarkets.

'I think they [the market in England] started to cover a little bit more, they have a section for Asian food, and a lot them [foreign food] [...] maybe Arabic or Indian, that kind of things, started to introduce more Chinese and created more like instant noodles but they have seaweed'

[Cynthia: 510-513]

Furthermore, the number of Asian takeaways and restaurants in the city increased, although only a few cities in the UK (i.e. Manchester) host a Chinatown. The Chinese women living in Manchester argued that in Chinatown they find most of their imports, reach out to the community and preserve their culture. Cynthia argues that currently she

could even find the special variety of 'mooncake' from Hong Kong, which shows great improvements in how Chinese food has been adopted and incorporated in the British market:

'[...] it is the modern one [mooncake] yeah [...] there is more in Hong Kong. In England I don't think you can find much, maybe just a few [...] Where do I buy them? You know, in Chinatown [...]

[Cynthia: 50; 52, 53; 55]

The increase of Asian food demand in the UK, coincides with the recent flow of wealthy and/or highly educated and skilled migrants who have headed to the West in search of employment opportunities and/or for educational attainments. Additionally, the recent emerging economic growth of China has also captured the interest of Westerners for this market. However, eating 'appropriate' Asian food still presented an issue for some of the women when they compared the food here with their home countries: the cost of food is doubling with food insecurity issues being crucial for their well-being, their food choices are limited by the difficulties of finding certain ingredients and/or the affordability of the cost of commuting to the places to find those, the quality of food is perceived to be much lower and they feel estranged in these new food spaces. As a consequence, the women expressed concerns about their health and nutrition in relation to their eating patterns.

The women argued that they could find the most common Asian ingredients in the UK in local supermarkets. Yet some special ingredients could only be found at the Asian retailers, whilst others are brought back when they visit their families abroad. The women construct their sense of place while navigating the cities, in which they live, in search of their ingredients. This has required them to change some of their traditional habits to adjust to a new environment and culture. The women's adjustments were followed by feelings of insecurity for the origins of food and estrangement from the local customs. In particular, concerns were raised about the freshness of food. In contrast to their home countries, where they are used to purchasing livestock in poultry markets and the food stalls have a richer display, these women recounted that they do not always have a choice

and do not feel in control of the quality of their purchases in the UK. This generates feelings of insecurity in relation to the quality of their diets and nutrition. Some differences were found especially when shopping in the local open markets. First, the idea of the market, as conceived in the UK, is a unique place located far from the home. It changed the way the women cooked, ate, shopped and even preserved their food. Second, the women argue about missing the opportunity to choose their food and bargain when shopping at an open market. Victoria finds it unusual having to walk from her home to the city centre to reach a place where she can find a food market:

'In my country you can find a market - not a supermarket [but] an open market, very near your house, wherever you live there will be a market near your house [...] And the chicken [is] still alive! And you say -I want this chicken- and they will do it for you. They kill the chicken for you [...]

[Victoria: 405-411]

Similarly, Emily discusses how shopping in the UK has shaped her cultural habits as she adopts the habit of freezing her food.

'In China I normally buy some ready-cooked meat [...]. In food markets there is ready-cooked meat, is so many (sic.). In China [...] if you go there, if you want any meat - you know a lot of Chinese people like erm intestine, the stomach, the liver [...] pig tongue [...] then they cook [the meat] this way delicious (sic.). You go to buy each [entrails] individually [...].

Here [in the UK] the shop [shopping] is totally different. [...] I buy big chunks of everything [...]. It's not because I want big (sic.), it's because their quality is better [...]. Costco supermarket, I like [the] meat from there, I think their meat is good quality [...] [but] if you want to buy beef [it] is [in] big chunk [...]. Even for [the] beef they give you erm so many kinds. This is from Scotland [the meat]. You know, the market [open market] [...] I never buy any meat because the market people [vendors] they are not quality control that much. [...] [In China] we are growing, we are not freezing a pig'.

[Emily: 435-444; 504-515]

In this account, Emily raises issues of trust about shopping at the market in the UK. She has made it a habit to shop for meat at trustworthy retailers. Moreover, in a Chinese market she could vary and select the shopping based on her needs and preferences, whereas in the UK she found her choice in relation to buying and storing food were

restricted. The women stated that they faced challenges while shopping boxed or refrigerated foods, or while eating at restaurants, as they did not have much choice and could not appreciate the freshness of the food in the UK. For instance, in their countries slaughtering the animals is a tradition rooted in the culture of a self-sustaining economy from wherein the local traders make a living. The system of refrigeration could be costly and unfeasible. Interestingly, most of the women stated that this was the reason why they had started being more selective with food in the UK, for instance by shopping at the supermarket where they believe that there is more control over the food. They also checked the product labels to know its origins and ate the local produce in order to retain control over the quality of their nutrition. Open markets in the UK are seen as affordable for vegetables and fruit. Here, the women can find some good deals for the preparation of their traditional meals, with only a few special ingredients being purchased at the Chinese shops (i.e. rice, soya bean sauce, glutinous flour etc.).

Another point of discussion made by the women, and related to shopping in the UK, was that the Chinatown and Asian wholesalers were not easily accessible to those who lived far from the city centre. In the UK Victoria used to freeze her food, since she could not reach the open market every day:

'When I [will] come [sic.] back to my country I need a bigger fridge [...] I had a maid, and she goes [sic.] to supermarket [open market] everyday and we don't need to- [have a fridge]. But now [...] I will go to the market on Saturday or Sunday and put lots of things in there and use [them] for the whole week.'

[Victoria: 436-439]

The system of refrigeration sounds like a good option for Victoria, since she has to walk a distance to reach the city centre to shop for food. Consequently, the possibilities for accessing their cultural food items are restrained particularly if the women could not afford to travel or did not drive a car. For the women who cannot afford to commute, their access to certain urban and cultural spaces (i.e. Chinatown) remains limited. This may affect the quality of their diets and the maintenance of their culture, as well as their integration into the local communities (Pedersen, 2013) which could lead to their isolation. Those women who could drive, found driving challenging. Outlets outside the

town were preferred for shopping because they are cheaper and have more choice compared to the ones in smaller cities.

Belonging is expressed by the women by their needs to exert their rights and control over resources, while retaining their customs. Having cultural food and spaces, determines their satisfaction and integration in the host society. However, the thematic analysis revealed that relocation is affected by the financial conditions that impact the women. Women who live outside the city centre and have a car have more chances to mobilise, whilst the women who live in the city centre and/or did not drive had to use other means of transportation to visit the city, which left them at slight disadvantage in terms of costs. The fact that women could find most of their ingredients in the city, did not necessarily mean that they could afford them. The high cost of Asian foodstuffs remains a sensitive issue for most of them. Although the women purchase Asian food, not all of them could afford to regularly consume their traditional foods:

'I cannot always have Chinese food because it will be too expensive to cook at home, so that's why [...] I do my main shopping in Tesco or Sainsbury or Morrison, but sometimes I go to [the] Chinese supermarkets [...] because there are some vegetables that I can't find in Tesco [...]. When I was a student then uhm... I have [sic.] limited budget say [sic.] so my focus would be oh -I can't always spend money on food so I will have to think about [it] ok, where can I buy food at a lower price or so. At that time I think one of the reason [sic.] why I can't [sic.] always have food in the past was because it is too expensive to buy Chinese ingredients here so [...] and also because at that time the people around me they were not Chinese, so in that case I have [sic.] opportunity to try non-Chinese food'

[Sandra: 71-74]

As regards to this point, the women are unable to afford the cost of their original food in the local shops and thereby have to reduce the consumption of certain ingredients. A woman, who has lived in Manchester for fifteen years, still talks in these terms when it comes to Chinese food:

'I normally shop in Asda because it's closer to where I live. Morrisons and some of the markets around there as well for more fresh fruit and veg [...]. Sainsbury sometimes for more quality food [...] but I try to stick [to], you know, shops for more within a budget [sic.]. There's definitely a lot of food that I can't find in this country and I have in Hong Kong, and food that I can find here are [sic.] so more expensive than the one in Hong Kong, like tofu and the Chinese vegetables, like two or three times the price in Hong Kong,

that's why [...] I tend to budget myself and just [do] not eat as much because I try to save money so [...]'

[Cynthia: 133-136; 215-219]

Most importantly, the accounts reveal that consuming traditional food still presents issues for the Asian women who have worked and lived in the UK for fifteen years. Although, Sandra and Cynthia have lived in the UK long enough to feel completely comfortable while consuming other cuisines, the fact that they have limited possibilities to purchase Chinese food is problematic. In particular, the thematic analysis reveals gaps in the women's experiences, chiefly due to the lack of finances, more for some women than others. Particularly, in this thematic analysis, the women who expressed these concerns were single women (employed and unemployed). In general, the participants recounted that the costs of traditional food affected the quality of their lives especially when they were students. Accounts like the above reveal that like Sandra and Cynthia, other women may have struggled and continue to do so because they cannot afford their traditional foods abroad. Reducing the consumption of traditional food to balance the costs of living requires political attention and action to fight social disadvantage and poverty. Indeed, the lack of the traditional food has consequences for women's well-being and may also lead to a loss of culture (Pedersen, 2013).

Besides the socioeconomic disadvantage, there are also cultural reasons to consider when looking at the attitudes of Chinese women with respect to their budgeting of Chinese food in the UK. The memories of these women are embedded with the chronicles of poverty in their families and the original countries. These memories have been passed down to the new generations through the observation of their parent's foodwork. The women's attitudes regarding their decisions on how frequently to treat themselves to Chinese food, seem to maintain a certain affinity with the family habits and ethos in the home country. Family attitudes may play a role and thus, the idea of sustainability suits the middle class women relocated to the UK. This is a sociocultural view that takes into consideration the idea that the women are still influenced by their familial practices of saving money on food:

'I remember I saw my parents and my older sisters when we have [sic.] the Chinese festival we couldn't afford to have chicken or meat all the time but when there is [sic.] some festival we will try to buy a full chicken. They they cooked the whole chicken and then I remember they chop [sic.] it themselves [...] maybe is more practical, in a way say you have the all [sic.] chicken and then the all [sic.] family - say we have seven children and the parents together. How could you share the all [sic.] chicken? I know that in the Western culture they will. They will like cut it yeah? [sic.] the father does the cutting [sic.] yeah? and then there are pieces for everybody. But the Chinese will chop it and then everybody can take small pieces'.

[Maggie: 220-230]

Saving money on their traditional food, balancing the ingredients used in the preparation of their meals and creolizing the Chinese meals with other local ingredients appears to be also a strategy against the colonialism or cultural appropriation of their foods abroad. The cost of traditional food abroad is much higher than in the home country and certain foods are considered a luxury by the Asian communities.

'I just remember one bad experience about food it was on the plane, whether is from here back to Hong Kong or [from] Hong Kong back to here, I smell someone having a cup of noodle so I thought how fancy I don't mind having a pot [of] noodle. So I asked them - Can I have a cup of noodle? And then she [fly assistant] told me how many [...] pounds. So I gave them 5 pounds and they gave me only 1 or 2 pounds [back]? So is [sic.] very expensive for a cup of noodle. So by the time when [sic.] the cup of noodle arrived I started to have it, try - Terrible! It was terrible! It was like eating rubber. It's the worst terrible cup of noodle I had and it was expensive and then I looked [at] the brand and I mean I never seen [sic.] this brand before and then I recognized [realised] [sic.] never buy those brands that are not from the East because if it is not Japanese, Korean, Thai or Chinese or whatever, they won't be- [good] '

[Maggie: 548-561]

Furthermore, the women who worked and lived alone brought to attention how the lack of family support and the hectic nature of their lives, has left them divided between work or studies and house management, and consequently lead them to engage unhealthy eating patterns. The women attributed these difficulties to the fact that most of them did

not have cooking skills. The generations of educated and highly skilled women found it challenging to cook, as they never had to do it before.

'Because I am working at the moment [and] I tend to sleep quite late and wake up early and I rush and then miss my breakfast. I might just have lunch and dinner. So I think, when my mom moved over here for a few months, I think my eating started to be back to regular and I had my breakfast, lunch, and dinner because she would cook and will provide [food for me] and then I might just cook at the week ends when she [mother] cooks at the week days. Otherwise when I am alone I just eat whenever I want'.

[Cynthia: 119-125]

Food opens up an interesting analysis of women's particular positions. Especially for disadvantaged groups (i.e. migrants and women), spaces of culture are re-created in their communities and homes and are therefore important sites to consider if researchers want to study migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). This means that a feminist ethnographical and intersectional approach to migration is not only preferred but necessary to understand the position and spaces that migrants, and women in particular, occupy in society. Human geography should consider food security in the discourse of place and migration in order to shed light on positions of marginalization and struggle (Marte, 2012). Furthermore, re-centering gender in the discourse of migration, space and food may be a necessary first step in constructing more democratic cities.

Overall, living in England was reported as being satisfying in relation to general living conditions. Despite the disruptions mentioned, the women in Manchester considered it a good place to maintain their traditional culture. The women tried solutions to overcome disruptions: doing more cooking, avoiding wasting food, eating leftovers, taking advantages of sales and discounts, reducing their shopping in Chinese supermarkets, using more local ingredients, checking for brands made in Asia, treating themselves to a restaurant meal only on special occasions or sharing the cost of the bill with friends, buying and eating local ingredients, and selecting doing their shopping from different supermarkets.

'From time to time only [eating at the restaurant] because it's quite expensive for me, so I'll treat myself maybe once a month like all the tofu, all the Chinese vegetables, but

otherwise I try to stick to [the] local food, local vegetables and fruits because I know it's not preserved and it's you know all the original forms [sic.] [where is from]'

[Cynthia: 141-143]

' (...) around Chinatown, I am used to Chinatown, but it is much cheaper, we normally pay about seven pounds and we share, you know, everything, so it is quite good for me, yeah'

[Diane: 46, 47]

'Different supermarkets have different food, costs and they [food] taste different. I buy the mushrooms from Morrison and the soya bean sauce [...] in Chinese supermarket and the green vegetables also from [the] Chinese supermarket. If I want to buy some oranges I often choose Asda. Yeah, the fruit at Asda tastes sweet. Morrison, erm I often buy some bread and milk, in Iceland some frozen foods, in Sainsbury some fruit [...]'

[Rachel: 159-161; 178, 180]

'Like there is a kind of vegetable called Pak Choi well, I did find [it] in Morrison, but the price is much much more expensive than in Chinese supermarkets. So it is just selective, I know what kind of food is cheaper in each supermarket and then I go in that supermarket'

[Sandra: 85-87]

The women create maps of the city through their experiences. They appoint the urban spaces that are accessible to their pockets. Interestingly, these maps are shared through informal networks to pass down information to the newcomers and facilitate their relocation.

'As soon as we are here, the Chinese friends who were here before showed us everywhere, where to buy the Chinese food and also Chinatown'

[Helen: 73,74]

Also, the women were introduced to an array of foreign cuisines due to the cosmopolitan nature of the population and learnt about foodways that they were not familiar with previously.

8.1.2 Theme 2: Creolization

Another strategy the women utilised to prevent disruptions due to relocation was the creolization of meals, traditions, and diets (e.g. changes in their regular menus and cooking style). Creolization is the indigenization of tastes, a mix of the 'traditional' elements of one culture with the 'new' and 'modern' incoming aspects of the host culture which are selected and (re)created by the individuals, and become part of oneself and/or a culture (Cohen, 2007, 2013). Howes (1996), describes the indigenization of foods, as the way minorities actively employ consumer goods according to their interests and knowledge. Here, I present some examples of creolization used by the Chinese women.

Firstly, the creolization of their meals occurs when issues surrounding the availability and affordability of food lead women to creolise their meals to change their eating patterns progressively by replacing or mixing some Chinese ingredients with others purchased locally. The result is a '*Chinese food made in England*' .

'Even my kids love my spaghetti [...] but I already changed [the recipe] a little bit. I use the [tomato] sauce, I also cooking [sic.] the Chinese sauce that makes the taste a little bit Chinese [...] but I use spaghetti and tomato, carrots, all of these ingredients and a little bit more Chinese ingredients, yeah.'

[Mary: 27-30]

The diverse communities that have settled in the city, have had an impact on the women's diets, since they also determine the availability of products and cuisines. The women argued that they purchased foreign ingredients to prepare their traditional food. For instance, Victoria points out that she purchases Chinese ingredients mostly because there are not Vietnamese shops near where she lives.

'Because Vietnamese [sic.] is [a] small country you can find lots of things in [the] Chinese stores, but it's just for Chinese. Some things [ingredients] we can use the same, like people in China use [sic.], but some herb, special herb, I can't find. Like [special] mint.'

[Victoria: 126-128]

The creolization of their meals was also employed as a strategy not to waste food and manage the budget:

'I think because of my background, ehm, our family were quite poor when we were little so we don't want to waste things so, erm, sometimes I will see what we have in our fridge I make use of what we have and mix them together [laugh] so a lot of the time, erm my husband will say, oh you are very creative you have been creative, another new- [dish]'

[Maggie: 202-206]

Also, creolizing their meals has made the cooking easier. Emily argues that since she met her partner, who is local, she has started mixing the two cuisines as well as using different cooking methods to prepare her food. Cooking has become a quicker process as the preparation of Chinese dishes is usually time-consuming:

'Sometimes you found vegetables not very interesting and you just feel like you miss a little bit- In China [there are] so many kinds, you can chose, you can have a change. So [here] the change is not that much, but after erm I met [my] English husband I started to steam some vegetables and I found that's very nutritious and delicious as well. I don't have to fry everything. So I found that's [a] very good improvement and so easy! So I try to mix these two cultures. And then found [that] not to cook [sic.] is easier than before - because you know my husband cooks [in a] big pan, you know the stew - so we can store some in the fridge and in the freezer. It's very fresh [...] and then I just cook some vegetables and little [sic.] meat to add [sic.] [to] his meal. It's so easy, you know, I don't have to everyday buy chicken [or] erm cook fish. Every day do this is too much'

[Emily: 950-955-471-478]

Second, creolization is the way through which the women try to feel part of the host society by adapting and celebrating the Western festivals.

'...on Christmas people [English people] will have Turkey, and then my friends they will do the Chinese way, you know. What they do is, [do] you know the hot pot? The Chinese do the hot pot dinner. They have a big pot of water and then they just put the food inside until is ready and then they just eat it [...]. [If] I am alone at home [...] I think I better cook something non-Chinese to celebrate because it is not a Chinese festival [...]. Even though I don't cook Turkey because, you know, it is too much'

[Sandra: 247-51]

However, in the literature creolization is defined as the mix of ingredients in the preparation of food (Abarca, 2004), and the remaking of festivals, whereas in this study, new patterns of creolization have emerged. The women's diets included the regular consumption of foreign dishes as a result of creolization. Living in multicultural societies has, therefore, led people to be exposed to these foreign cuisines. Thus, some of these foreign dishes became regular in their menus alongside the traditional food. The women were keen to try different cuisines even when they lived in their home countries; however, the interest in consuming foreign foods increased and changed when they relocated to the UK. The women described broadening their diets by cooking European (i.e. Italian, Spanish, French, Turkish, occasionally English food) and Asian dishes (i.e. Korean, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese and Indian) either to enlarge the choice of what they eat, or because they felt interested and fascinated by diverse cuisines, and as a way to approach/know diverse cultures. Cynthia remembers the time when she arrived in this country as a student and she did not know how to cook her food and what to eat. She described relocation as a process that commenced the struggle and the fascination of exploring the place through the prism of foreign cuisines:

'So it kind of started with food, just basic pasta, more like Italian food mainly, so pasta, pizza [laugh] not the very healthiest. I sort of try to adapt and incorporate to my daily cooking as well but I think I get really lazy so I just stay to the basic like Chinese food, Italian food. I can't cook Indian because I haven't had the time and the patience to learn how to make the curry from [the] scratch, so I just get the bottle of curry'

[Cynthia: 74-85]

These cuisines formed their main diets as most of the women did not know how to cook. The women have also expanded their circle of friends to include other foreigners. Similarly, or being in a relationship with a foreign partner provided a them with a chance to know about try new dishes.

'So he [the foreign partner] cooks mainly English food, well he cooks like foreign erm he cooks Indian food, erm Hungarian food, Italian food [sic.] well, he cooks something [like] goulash [...] beef and chilli con carne [...] anyway, I mean International. He doesn't- well

he also can cook Chinese food but I just take this, I cook Chinese food so he just cook something else. He cooks very nice'

[Emily: 133-143]

'[when I came here I found] yeah bean on toast and then I found some bread you know, a lot of pizza and then I found that oh British food is really something I don't want, I can't have it [...] (But) because, you know, [I] don't waste the food [that] people give you [...] and you eat it. [...] But then I met my husband and I went to their house, you know, his mom's parents [...] and they cook such good British food. The first time I went to their house they cooked the erm stewed [...] and then they have some vegetables they cooked in their way, like using a little butter on the pan [...] And now I say oh this is British food? And then after that every time I was to their house is [sic.] so enjoyable erm because the food there I really love his mom's food [...] it's English food but I love [it] then that's totally changed my view about the English food'

[Emily: 327-383]

Although the women's account depict the poor representation of Chinese cuisines in UK, they are still able to eat dishes that they are familiar with in some restaurants, owned held by immigrants from different parts of Asia.

'I think here [...] because the majority of Chinese nowadays still is the people from Hong Kong [sic.] because of [...] historical reasons, so I think nowadays [...] [the] Chinese dishes [that] we have they are from Hong Kong or Southern China, but it just represents [a] part of [...] the Chinese food [...]. I am from Hong Kong, that's why when I go to [the] Chinese restaurants I can find lots of [...] familiar Chinese dishes.'

[Sandra: 279-285]

Diane, who has spent 30 years living in the UK, argues that she regularly looks for the Chinese ingredients in the various immigrants' shops:

'I think it was happening many years ago [when] it was difficult to get the ingredients that I want but these days you have absolutely no problem,. Even Thai, Indian, Chinese, you can buy everything, you know, from different supermarkets like Turkish [...]. No, it's not hard these days'

[Diane: 181-184]

Interestingly, these cuisines are for the majority Asian, or the colonised (Appadurai, 1988) and/or Southern cuisines:

'I think because I came to Manchester, I think Manchester is already a multicultural kind of city so I did actually get a lot of Chinese food, especially when I miss home I get Chinese food in Chinatown. There is a lot, eh you know there is Rusholme for curry Indian food, Pakistan food, erm the Spanish food as well and definitely Italian everywhere. So I think when I came to Manchester I thought there was a lot of choice'

[Cynthia: 165-170]

These 'soul cuisines' are comforting for the women. The colonial food helps them to survive when they cannot cook or access their traditional food. The immigrant shops supply some ingredients that are still hard to find in local and even traditional shops abroad, thus generating physical experiences and exchanges between cultures. The traditional shops become spaces that help the women to find the comfort of home in the city. In these spaces, the geographical distances are dismantled to issue new questions of identity and belonging. The fervent exchange of foods that takes place in these shops and the creolization of these Asian cuisines, along with the ingredients borrowed from other cultures, generate amenable places and spaces of belonging through which different communities are tied together from their activities in the kitchens, food sharing and shopping.

Sometimes, eating foreign food is a choice that is independent of the disruptive experiences that the women have faced, such as the difficulties related to relocation, instead, it has other reasons. The women argue that they are more open to include different communities in their lives and purposively create occasions for these encounters. The hospitality of our cities could, as a matter of fact, be evaluated by the spaces that people open through the food networks that they create. Creolization, in these terms brings us to the issue of the sociability and indigenization of the 'foreign' space. In this quote, Cynthia describes one of these encounters or another pattern of creolization that can be found inside the immigrant's kitchen:

'[...] yeah yeah it's quite funny, for example like Vietnamise spring rolls they are not fried they are quite healthy, they don't fry them. [There is] actually kind of like a citru, kind of flower, it's in the middle it's quite good. Me and my friends we always do food gathering once a month, it's a bit like 'Come [on] dine with me' but we don't rate each other [...] we all enjoy different kind of food because we got [people] from Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia

[...] Indian, Chinese, just within them they have many cuisines within their own culture. So I haven't actually met an Italian and try [sic.] their food. We tried to cook Italian ourselves but it's not proper Italian food, yeah. I tried Spanish as well, I had a Spanish [friend] and he made paella.'

[Cynthia: 191-209; 279-285]

The women recounted that when engaging with other Asian friends, cooking together helped them in acquire cooking skills and expanded food choices. They acquired different eating habits, and in the process reduced the gap and improved their relationship with people from other backgrounds. By her appreciation of the culinary practices of the Vietnamese, Cynthia dismantles cultural and geographical boundaries through the positive feelings that Vietnamese food gives her when she eats it in the UK. The Vietnamese spring rolls (unlike the Chinese one) are not fried and are healthier and consequently, they fulfil her need to remain healthy. Here unfamiliar practices, become familiar through the socialization of the commensal events and the domestication of cooking and eating practices of foreign cuisines. Diasporas are bound by the idea of a common history shared between people belonging to unique groups having the same ethnic backgrounds (Cohen, 2008). However, the global divide between advanced economies and the emerging Asian economies, that also reflects in the way the Eastern and Southern cuisines are marketed in the UK, creates conditions for the Asian women to abound together as a community. The Asian cuisines that create comfortable tastes generate new meanings of existence and give space to the creolization of customs, whilst sustaining these emerging economies abroad through food chores, in which the women play an active role. Food renders these diasporas to be more similar rather than diverse from each other.

The women explained that the lack of cooking skills is due to the fact that the new generation of Asians were raised by parents who did insist to completing housework, but rather encouraged them to work or study. Cooking seems to be survival skills that was learnt during relocation. Cooking skills are, thus, acquired through multisensorial and multicultural encounters with other nationalities and their cuisines. Some of the women learned how to cook the respective countries' foods from their friends, resulting in creolised cuisines.

'I felt it was much easier to cook when I arrived here because maybe I was on my own, and then I just explored whatever, you know, food that I wanna try [sic.]. And because I was with a lot of students say, I was in to try different kind of food, I felt the freedom to explore the food that I won't normally eat when I am at home'

[Cynthia: 184-187]

Furthermore, most of the women incorporated other culinary methods into their traditional cooking which has made it easier cooking Chinese food. The women argued that while they did not master cooking skills, learning how to cook new dishes helped them in enhancing the quality of their relocation, expanding their menus and reducing isolation. Creolization explains how spaces of diversifications, rather than mere geographical spaces, emerge through food practices in the migrants' lives. It also suggests that creolization is an expedient to access food. Food access for culturally diverse groups in multicultural societies is important to ease relocation and improve well-being. Moreover, the engagements that creolized menus create, breaks the fragmentation and isolation of communities and help in revitalizing the social tissue.

8.1.3 Theme 3: Home country

Food was always talked about in terms of embodied proprieties around belonging, with a strong association to the home country. From the interviews it emerges that the women lead their answers focusing specifically on the healing characteristics of their home country food. A link between food, place and health was also expressed by embodied sensations like craving that indicate the nostalgia for the home country:

'Sometimes you [are] just craving for food, a certain kind of food you want to eat, you just you don't want anything else because [...] just that specific kind of food [...]. Before I went [sic.] back to Hong Kong I will always think about oh I want to eat this I want to eat that, because I couldn't find [it] in this country. In England I was ready to eat different things, different kind of food [that] I miss from Hong Kong, [...]. I eat till the stomach is full, till the stomach hurts [...] I want to make myself plenty of this food.'

[Maggie: 15-21]

However, the women made it clear that more than the food itself, it was the memories of home and this food that made it special. This signals the importance of the sociability of food.

'I mean food is not just superficial, just to fill our stomach, the more you talk about and than you can relate to culture memories and lots of things, people you remember and than you miss them because you miss what they cooked before, and because this meal will remember them'

[Maggie: 730-733]

Food helps women remain connected to their kin. Cynthia argues that the vegetarian food cooked and shared at the Buddhist temple is a healthy option for her. The home country food gives her a sense of warmth that she needs when she lives abroad, because it is the parents' food.

'I know they say like if your heart is there the cook will be much better and I think that's true for me [...], the food is really good here [at the temple] [...] but I think my mom's food is, it will always be the best because it gives a sense of belonging and home'

[Cynthia: 173; 175]

Food is a way to express emotions and nourish social relationships (Sutton, 2001), as it seems to denote familial care and appreciation. The women experienced loneliness especially because they did not have the support of their families and kin while living abroad. They reverted to their traditional food, especially when experiencing homesickness, which intensifies around the time of national holidays.

'uhm here the food is similar, we can make ourselves. The difference is people. Here we have fewer friends and relatives'

[Helen: 30,31]

'If I miss home [...] I stick to Chinese [food] because [...] there's rice'

[Cynthia: 176; 178]

The women cook and share the food with other friends, and this food is especially important because it connects them with the home.

'[...] in China I like pig trotters [...], I always liked it. But there is once I cooked [them] myself [...] I went to market and bought twelve [pig trotters] and thinking I cook twelve and I give some [to] friends. Before I give them I – oh wait is stink! Erm you should be good at cook [sic.] it, you know, they say you have to do many procedures a lot of steps to get away of the smell. My friend cooks it so delicious. And then she cooks that the same way of the tongue. And I tried it, actually [they have] the same taste like pig chotters. So I just really liked it'

[Emily: 520-526]

Emily remembers a time when she failed at cooking pig trotters (i.e. pork feet) in the UK. However, once her Chinese friend cooked and shared with her the pig tongue, she was reminded of the pig trotters that she ate in China.

The sociability of food is crucial for the women who may spend important holidays, like New Year, away from their families. During this time, the traditional food is a source of comfort. Festivals are a national call for family loyalty and celebrating the reuniting of relatives. Chinese New Year is the most important occasion for Chinese women and the dishes prepared during these times are special. In China, the family will get together to prepare them. In the host country, where some of the women are alone and most of the celebratory preparations and the musicality of the festival are lost (e.g. cooking together, visiting friends and families, parades, time off work etc.) traditional food results in the only but crucial semiotic index of home (Parasecoli, 2011) (e.g. especially when displayed prominently during festivals). Sandra remembers the festival because the supermarkets display traditional food at that time:

'Whenever I go to the Chinese supermarkets, if there are festivals coming then, you will see those related foods displayed on the shelf and will know – oh the festival is coming.'

[Sandra: 214-215]

Furthermore, celebrating national festivals is difficult abroad, since these are working days in the host country. National traditions are experienced differently due to the women's isolation. If they have a chance, the women prefer to return home to celebrate with their families. Otherwise, the women may remain alone. While food is fundamental to everyday routine, it is not always ceremonial:

'Ehm I do not really always celebrate, I mean in terms of celebration usually you have food, you know the food related to festival, for example the Moon Cakes related to Moon Festival, because for example if you want to have the Moon Cake you have to go to Chinatown to buy one and usually is more expensive than what you can find in HK, so I think I don't really go to the Chinatown to buy one [...] usually I would ask my friends whether if they would like to try, but you know, for example the local Chinese here, if they have family they will have a Moon Cake at home already [...], but I won't try to celebrate because my family, they are not here, and so I thought ok, it's not a big deal anyway, I would call home on those occasions'

[Sandra: 214-215]

Women who live alone do not bother preparing special foods for themselves, as it is time-consuming and costly. Moreover, since the 'community' is always moveable, networks of friendships are fragmented and tend to be unstable.

'Here the food is similar, we can make ourselves. The difference is people. Here we have fewer friends and relatives.'

[Helen: 28-29]

However, these family feasts can also be transformed into open events abroad. The women, who are engaged in associations or groups, celebrate festivals with friends and strangers.

'Erm well here I don't get all the kind of food unless I come to the temple because I don't really make all the food myself and I don't have people to share with so I don't really cook or make them. Erm, at home [Hong Kong] my mom cooks and she makes some. Here [at the temple] they have volunteers coming to cook for everybody and they have free lunch every Sundays, and during events like this [moon festival] they tend to be for free as well.'

Sometimes they mix sort of food and they put [it] in a box and they can sell it, erm the money just go to charity, erm and basically we [eat] all in the dine hall' .

[Cynthia: 259-262: 268-273]

On these occasions, restaurants are also favourable option, as they host co-nationals, to celebrate traditional events and eat special regional delicacies. The food and the environment here make relieve the nostalgia of the homeland (Avakian and Harper, 2005).

'It's more about the environment. I think, the most the Chinese restaurants [...] make me feel relaxable [sic].'

[Helen: 114-115]

For these reasons, restaurants are expected to maintain the 'authenticity' of their cultures and high quality standards. It was recurrent that the women referred to the Westernization of Chinese dishes and how it had impacted upon their experience of relocation. The scarce quality of Chinese food in restaurants generated distress and disappointment.

'I remember one of the restaurant we went, we went for lunch and one of the dishes you know [...] they like to use a lot of gravy, gravy yeah? on top of the food [...] when I saw the gravy so stick on top of the meat I thought oh no I can do better than this. They are just messing around food to English people but we are Chinese, we came from Hong Kong and we know where is good Chinese and where is not so-'

[Maggie: 445-465]

Along with that, the women talked about their own city maps through informal networks, with regards to where to eat good food and where to find traditional ingredients at affordable costs. They recounted that it was quite easy to find good, reasonably priced restaurants in their country. While dining out in their countries is not expensive, here most of them often cannot afford it and have no choice but to limit this practice.

Conversely, positive experiences of food in the UK were also making memories. Sandra argues that she will miss some of the Chinese food found in the UK when she is in Hong Kong:

'Dim Sum, you know, the little thing [...] when I go back to Hong Kong, we also have Dim Sum because we have Chinese restaurants in Hong Kong, I will compare and then I found that oh I miss the Dim Sum in Manchester [...] and sometimes I think it's not just the food, maybe the memory [...] because like sometimes I will go to a Chinese restaurants with friends and we just have nice food and we have a fun and have a life shared, and then when I go back to Hong Kong I would sometimes miss, you know, those times when I went to Chinese restaurants in Manchester, and I will think that, oh good memories'

[Sandra: 121-123; 132-135]

This account explains that Sandra would miss Manchester because she has established connections that make her feel at home here. The account reveals that the women have shown an attachment to the host country through their tasting experiences, thus, confirming how food is crucial in bonding to a place and making it home. The food in Manchester becomes embedded within the memories of these commensal times and Manchester becomes another home.

The following theme will tackle the topic of exclusion and, how the Asian women describe certain discriminations that they faced with regards to their food. Furthermore, I will also discuss how traditional food generates new meanings of existence, identities and inclusion for them in the UK.

8.1.4 Theme 4: Exclusion

This theme focuses on some discriminations that the women faced in regards to their food practices and how language barriers rendered their inclusion in certain spaces, such as restaurants, more difficult. The women explain how some comments had an impact on the way they performed their food practices and affected their sense of belonging. The women agreed that the interest and appreciation for Asian food has increased since they arrived in the UK, and has taken centre stage with the mushrooming of Michelin-starred Asian restaurants all around the UK. However, besides the affirmation of gourmet Asian

cuisines, some of the women spoke of the discrimination they faced regarding their food and culinary practices. In this section, I present some of these accounts about where and how women's food practices were questioned by the locals. The discrimination that the women faced about their customs reflects the difficulties in experiencing inclusion and belonging to the place where they live in. Emily remembers the time when she was a student living in Scotland with an old lady who was confused and made some jokes about her culinary customs.

'When I was in Edinburgh I stayed in [an] old lady's house [...] she was very old, [...] she is died now, but she was 90 and then I just bought a big bag of rice you know, Chinese people they always buy a big bag of rice [...] And then [she told me] -oh we will never [be] hungry even [if the] war start (sic.), even the Christmas has a snow [sic.] shops close [sic.] we will [never] starve to death, so eat this rice-. But she felt so pity that I eat rice, because she is a (sic.) Scottish, rice for her is very strange [...]. So there is once I cooked some rice with meat and pak choi [...] I feel [that it was] very delicious, very nutritious, green vegetables and meat and the rice, and I give [sic.] to her half [a] bowl and she was like -oh thank you so much- but then she had a little bit [of] rice, a little bit [of] meat and everything just throw away [laugh] because she doesn't wanted [sic.], she doesn't feel the same like we do'

[Emily: 402-442]

This memory seems significant to Emily's experience of relocation. Emily negotiates spaces of inclusion by sharing the rice with the elderly lady. The event described takes into consideration the cultural distances, the generational gap between Emily and her and the steps they took to understand each other, with Emily sharing some of her food with the lady. Emily argues that the elderly woman cannot see the significance that rice has for her, culturally, in terms of belonging (i.e. the Chinese people always buy a big bag of rice). Whilst rice might not be considered a high value food in the British diet, it is the part of the Asian staple diet. The old lady's joke sets up a colonialist narrative. Emily's eating practices, are implicitly downgraded, with cultural tastes and dietary norms as being patterned and poor in nutritional values. This projection of sentiments of pity and the reduction of the value of Emily's diet and cultural habits seems to have developed from the notions such as bags of rice associated to the food supplies that people bought in the war time or that people get during calamities. Furthermore, the evocation of the urban

system of rationing food that was adopted by Communists in China between 1964-1996 to boost industrialization (Hueneman, 1966³⁰), reflects a lack of understanding of the new generations of migrant students who grew up in a postsocialist society and did not have to worry about rationing.

The white colonization of East Asia has disabled these migrant cuisines by stereotyping their food as being unhealthy, warning people about their consumption, regulating through medical guidance and scientific evidence the use of certain ingredients, such as the use of salt and oil, and domesticated their practices to fulfil the tastes of the locals. The Chinese women argue about the negative connotations of their cuisines such as the fact that the Chinese food is equated to being junk food and thereby greasy and smelly. Emily and Helen both faced discrimination, in relation to their culinary habits, at their workplace:

'When we are eating in the common room, and everybody say oh yours [food] is too oily, yours is not healthy, yours is- look at mine- You are affected [...]. So next time I will bring something steamed and then oh that's healthy [laughs]. That looks good, that looks nice. My relatives here are getting used to the Western and less salt, less soya beans and oil here [...] and even when I go back to China for a month or two I never remember everything here, I just indulge myself there, have the Chinese food with oily things, as rice tasty, delicious, I forget about everything here'

[Helen: 398-402; 450-458]

Emily refers to the embarrassment when her lunch box is scrutinized by colleagues, who comment on her food, while eating together in the common room. These comments have changed the way she eats while she is at work, and in general as she now believes that she has to 'do as the Romans do' [474] in the UK. Nonetheless, she will treat herself to traditional food when she returns to China. The women describe the resistance by the locals in accepting parts of their migrant cultures and it seems implicit that they need to adjust to the local culture. Therefore, an attempt is made to localize food practices by way of offering medical advice to Emily, try to warn her about the use of some traditional ingredients like oil and soya bean sauce in her food. Similar to Helen, Emily refers to racial

³⁰ R. Huenemann, 1966, Urban rationing in communist china , The china quarterly, pp. 44-57.

comments that her colleagues made when they were having lunch together in the common room of the university where she works:

'This morning my colleague just made a joke with me [...]. Actually he did not offend me [did not want to offend me], he is just making a joke [...]. Because he was doing some [thing] very smelly yeah, so I said oh this is very smelly probably you shouldn't do it here. And he immediately said erm you know your Chinese food? It stinks, the stinky food that people eat, all the weird kind of food? I said what kind of weird food? [he replied] for example dog meat, chicken feet. I said dog meat if you go to China you really don't eat it. So I think after [I] talked to you, I think I know Italian people also eat chicken feet. I don't feel that [it was] such a shame to eat chicken feet, the part of animals, eating animals is a people surviving method [...]and then for chicken feet is quite common. [...] You don't have to make this as a symbolic, you know. There's so many kind of good symbols to be think about [sic.]'

[Emily: 969, 974-978; 981, 984; 1041-1050]

The literature shows a link between racism and food and how racism is intermingled with human's sensoriality (Fanon, 1952). Anthropologist Douglas in *Purity and Danger* (1996) argues that concepts like bodily pollution or dirtiness, involving tactual and visual perceptions, like greasy and oily physical sensations in the description of Emily's food, particularly observed in dietary (religious) norms are culturally constructed. Thus, she argues (1984: p. 3):

These danger-beliefs are as much threats which one man uses to coerce another as dangers which he himself fears to incur by his own lapses from righteousness (...). This is a more interesting level at which pollution ideas relate to social life. I believe that some pollutions are used as analogies for expressing a general view of the social order.

Eating different animal parts, as pointed out by Emily, was indeed a survival strategy. However, her Western colleagues considers these practices as being unethical and inhuman, which creates exclusion and barriers. These beliefs are meant to generate a sense of danger which restores the order of a special cultural system (Douglas, 1996). They are meant to create a sense of impurity and abjection in order to secure boundaries between diverse groups. The women's narratives show that in the common room, where

different social and dietary norms are displayed, conflicts manifest around the table and in particular with the repulsion for the 'other's' tastes, smells and practices when sharing these spaces. In particular, the Asian women stated that they found it quite difficult in sharing their British co-workers, which demonstrates clearly that it is still difficult for the women to relate to this group.

Further discriminations may be due to the language barriers. Restaurants are accessed by different communities based on their affordability. Language seems to be another factor, which customises the culture in these places, since these spaces regulate who is entailed to feel part of a culture by adopting their tastes and habits. The women were disappointed when they recalled their experiences. Some of the women declared that they had poor knowledge of British cuisine. The challenging experience of ordering a menu in British restaurants, particularly when they newly arrived in this country, sheds light on language barriers in consuming the local food. Mary explains how language barriers prevent Asian students from accessing spaces like British restaurants. This in turn could lead to limited opportunities for social integration with the locals. Mary is working on her website through which she aims to help Chinese students who are relocating abroad, by translating and explaining to them British dishes in order to encourage her compatriots to try British food:

'I have even created my website[...] actually is in Chinese [...]. Actually I would like to help Chinese people [...] to expand their eating experience [...] Chinese people in Western restaurants look at the menu [and] they don't know what is what [...]they look at food and think, oh what should I order, what taste would be like, they don't know so they finally just give up, very scary to make a mistake, so this just stops [them] going to a restaurant. Actually Chinese people love eating, they love food but just because those language barriers stop them to go further. So [in] my website I share my eating experience to [help] understanding other cultures [...]. The English people go to Chinese restaurant and then look at them and they just order egg, fried rice, erm sour sweet pork, and fried broccoli very very, just simple food but they miss the delicious one. This is also because they don't know [the] Chinese food. So they just find something they understand. You can find many Kiwi New Zealander they have close Chinese friends, then these Chinese friends will suggest oh choose this, choose that, then they can share their experience. I found some English blogs [in New Zealand] they just rate Chinese restaurant. They say [...] oh I went to this Chinese restaurant, the menu has got this, I tried this, that's so delicious -so anyone who goes there they try these -so some dumpling, some porridge, some Chinese cake [...]or like erm like chili [...]. They say you have to try. So many people give feedback then,

many Kiwi just gradually they stuck with Chinese food. One street called Dominia Road [...]could be Chinatown [because there are] a lot of Chinese restaurants'

[Mary: 272-314]

Some of the women argue that as newcomers they experienced barriers and felt limited in their knowledge of British cuisine. Not being able to read and understand a menu prevents communities from accessing special spaces of culture and decreases their chances to restore their sense of home. Most of the women argued that one of the ways they managed to get to know the place they lived was eating in local restaurants with a more experienced friend.

However, English language was still used to engage with and create bonds with other communities. In general, the women found that by engaging together in communal meetings around food, it helped bonding and reduced the social gap created by language. Further, the Chinese and Vietnamese women see the locals as being not well informed or adventurous, with regards to using ingredients and eating Asian cuisines, and therefore limited in their choices of ordering food. This, in turn leads to the incredibly diverse Asian cuisines becoming commercialised caricatures in restaurants. Only a few Asian dishes are cater to the taste of the locals. This impacts upon the quality of the women's experiences at restaurants. Also, the fact that many Asian ingredients are not yet readily incorporated in British diets could also slow the demand for Asian products in the UK.

'I think they [British people] selected only a certain type of cuisine that I think suits them, and the flavor is quite different and for example the way they cook, I think, they get scared in trying, they think they don't know how to make Chinese food but actually it's much more simple than they think it is. I have only tasted a few [dishes from] friends who are English and cooked Chinese food and when they do [it] I think the flavor is quite different and a they're little bit scared in using the ingredients'

[Cynthia: 496-501]

Nonetheless, it may reflect a social barrier between these groups. In the next account, Emily considers the classist and racial meanings that spaces like Western and Chinese-British restaurants in the UK have for her:

'Ehm, if we, whenever we can, we can manage, we can afford, we would go to a restaurant once a week, or at least, ehm every forth night, we must see that kind of environment, just have a feel and to see the people looking, if you look around to see the people what they wear, what they say, what they eat and you seem, you seem to be part of it [...]. Actually when you go to Chinese restaurant [in the UK], you feel like oh, look, look at people around in the restaurant, they look like a middle-class, so (1) it's a kind of feeling that make(s) you feel that you belong to that level of society [...]. In China that Western food is quite expensive! And we bought [sic.] the Western food [...]. Ehm, maybe because we want to be like a middle-class when we were in China [...]. I think is a kind of identity, you belong, you feel you belong to a certain class, so that you can have that kind of food, you can be in that kind of environment having that food. Maybe, that's the difference between Chinese and Western [people]. Western people, they think to the food itself more. If this is tasty, if this is delicious , if this is nutritious, if this is healthy, they think about food more. But at least I, other people I know, think of where you belong, more than the food itself. And that feeling, is really more important than the food itself'

[Helen: 97-113]

Emily reflects upon her desire to treat herself to 'white food' as her way to show belonging to the White middle class. She also explains that this desire is widespread and reflects the aspirations of the Chinese middle- and upper-class in post-socialist China. Furthermore, as the food in restaurants is expensive, it creates a sense of belonging and inclusion to a higher socio-economic class. The Western food in China is seen as a commodity that represents the high living standards and social status to which the Chinese aspire to belong. The practices that surround the preparation of food in Western restaurants (e.g. mannerism, the environment, even the clothes that costumers wear at the restaurants) reflect a new colonialism by the West in the East with the indoctrination of tastes and food habits of the new generations of Chinese in China.

Emily's account also reflects upon the racial and classist spatial divisions that are at play in society. Emily nurtures the desire to belong to the White middle-class by consuming non-Chinese food which she can afford occasionally in the Western restaurants. She considers eating Western food a way of expressing her existence in a place, which is clearly perceived through racial barriers, and where she still feels estranged and excluded. There is a desire of appropriating that food and being in certain spaces as to fulfill herself of that whiteness. However, it is only the Chinese food that has the proprieties of belonging and

home. In reality, eating Western food in the restaurants in Manchester gets boring, as food has not the same properties of home.

The results of this thematic analysis show that the women are looked at suspiciously when performing their food practices. This influences their sense of belonging, as the women either have to change or justify their habits in certain public spaces. The following section presents the interpretation of the themes of host country, creolization, home country and exclusion with references from the literature of sense of place, home and belonging.

8.2 Thematic analysis: interpretation

The analysis thus far has explored the ties between belonging, food and migration through four main themes: affordability, creolization, home country and exclusion. The themes show how women develop their belonging in the UK, whilst talking about their food habits and practices. The findings talk about the relocation process to the cities of Manchester and Leeds, and how women are strategic in their use of food and other sources, to make their place of arrival feel like home. The thematic analysis illustrated a general overview of the disruptions that the Asian women faced and the solutions they found to overcome them, with particular concerns regarding their health and well-being. The analysis highlighted the sociocultural, economic and political factors that organize the migratory space and regulate people and their foodstuff movement within these spaces, affect their sense of belonging. I briefly summarise the major points.

a) South East Asian women retain their original cuisine in the host country

The analysis suggests that women still cling to their original cuisine, irrespective of the time of resettlement. This shows that traditional food is an essential marker of belonging (Butcher, 2010; Counihan and Esterik, 2013) and their traditional food helps them to stay connected to their origins (Plaza, 2014). Indeed, whilst consuming local food was important for women's settlement, it was the retaining of their traditional food in England which required major adjustments. This means that the women were quite flexible food consumers (i.e. with the preparation and consumption of diverse cuisines),

but efforts were put in the traditional cuisine for the maintenance of their culture. The women experienced disruptions especially at the beginning of their journey due to difficulties in finding and/or getting their traditional ingredients, the cost of those, and the changes in their ordinary food performances (i.e. shopping and preparation). These disruptions made an impact on their eating patterns, and concerns were raised with regards to their health and diet. These resulted in an issue for the consumption of traditional food and the maintenance of healthy diets.

First, the cost and the limited choices of food concerns the fact that the local economy inhibits migrants, who cannot always afford their food, to construct their sense of home and belonging in the new country. Second, concerns about the freshness and quality of their food was also raised, whilst navigating different spaces and practices abroad. Cost of commuting to these places was a further influence, as the women could not always afford to travel. Third, the women experienced a loss of culture due to difficulties in celebrating national festivals abroad, and argued that issues of having the proper spaces, such as a Chinatown, to do so was also an issue. In addition, restaurants and other spaces like religious spaces and associations were also crucial to this purpose. They also experienced a loss of traditions if they were alone and/or could not cook their original foods. Finally, they were inhabited by a scarce quality of Chinese food in some restaurants (e.g. finding gravy on top of the food).

The thematic analysis has highlighted the concept of health as being culturally and socially bounded through the food practices that the women perform. Thus, aside from the consumption of traditional food, the women's concerns in relation to their health are also related to the possibilities to preserve these routines abroad. This includes the sensoriality of the environments in which these performances take place, which becomes a structural part (i.e. a signifier) of their ordinary ritualities. Moving abroad, therefore, requires adjustments in the embodied memories and in the embodiment of these environments, the sociality embedded in these new performances, and the sense of estrangement that the body feels when repeating these practices abroad. Sense of place (or place-making) resulted in the women's efforts to adapt to different customs of eating, shopping, familiarising themselves with new spaces and the preservation and adjustments of these food performances in the host country.

b) Traditional food relieves women's displacement and loneliness

The analysis illustrated the difficulties that the South-East Asian women experienced during migration. The women talk about experiences of disruption through food nostalgia, homesickness, loneliness, and the scarce ties to their community abroad. The effort to adjust to the host country was expressed in terms of maintaining the original cultures whilst adjusting to the local culture. Apart from the difficulties, and independent to the years spent in the UK, positivity emerged through the agency of women in finding strategies to cope with distress through food. Parasecoli (2014) argues that the home country is recounted through the food that diasporic groups display and share on their tables. In this thematic analysis the women talked about mealtime memories of celebrations with family and friends and how food was fundamental in retrieving these memories. The discussion of the themes shows that the women went through times in which they experienced splitted experiences of home that was healed alongside the time of resettlement in the UK through food. Particularly, the women who lived alone talked about their feelings of displacement and being homesick abroad. The traditional food helped them to relieve these feelings (Plaza, 2014). Eating traditional food emerged as an embodied need, as food was believed to have healing properties (Sutton, 2001) (e.g. a purification of the body). Especially when the women felt overwhelmed by the changes, the original food provided a restorative sense of home. These included feelings of isolation when eating alone and during festivals. The traditional food, also, provided them to be soaked with the sensorial embodiment of their cultures in the host country (Turgeon and Pastinelli, 2002). Research found that Asian women who settled abroad tend to use their traditional ingredients for curing and/or preventing health problems, (Anwar et al., 2015; Longhurst et al., 2009;). The findings of this thematic analysis confirm that places like open markets and groceries where the women shop for their ingredients, and the restaurants, where they eat their traditional cuisines, are fundamental for the women's well-being, as the sensorial life of food embedded in these practices have healing properties. In the discourse of health and well-being, which is predominantly represented by medical institutions, it is important to delve into the analysis on social and cultural factors that have an impact on the quality of relocation for migrants, especially women. The exclusion from social customs may lead to health consequences. Thus, I argue that spaces like open markets and traditional groceries from where the women

shop, are not only places of culture, but also spaces where health is constructed everyday through women's actions and cultural beliefs. It is paramount that policy makers consider this when planning and projecting places for citizenships. Also, practitioners working in the area of health should consider the fact that traditional food, food habits, customs, like slaughtering of animals, and cooking styles construct well-being of different cultural groups in different ways. Therefore, they should promote this discussion around diversity, by creating spaces where migrants can access, cook and even learn how to cook traditional food.

Furthermore, especially due to the continuous mobility of Chinese migrants, social relationships are weakened. Casti and Portanova (2008) indeed argue that following the dispersion of the Chinese people and the diversification of their cultures it is not possible to talk about a unique Chinese community. Commensality is therefore an occasion to (re)create a community abroad (Weismantel, 1998). In this thematic analysis the women talked about how they extended their idea of family during celebrations through food. Women gathering with friends or attending social events where food was involved felt less lonely and part of a community. Chinese restaurants are also regarded as places of culture (Chen, 2010, 2014). These are places where perhaps the women cannot always find 'authentic' home-country food, but they can experience feeling surrounded by a familiar 'community'.

c) The women express a desire for a different home and belonging

The women cannot enjoy the same variety of Chinese food in the UK as they would in their original countries, and this makes their diets quite repetitive. They therefore, became interested and indulged in foreign cuisines. This is partly due to the necessity to overcome the boredom of repetitive diets, and also because they became accustomed to eating more global cuisines abroad. Some women adopted local and ethnic dishes on a daily basis, alongside their Chinese food, and celebrated Western festivals. Eating the same food and partaking the same feasts are the way they understand and feel part of the host culture abroad (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002). Food became a crucial question of belonging after its sensual proprieties. Turgeon and Pastinelli (2002), argue that eating foreign foods contributes in troubling the categories of what is foreign and what is

familiar. Thus, the women construct a home where constantly the foreign becomes familiar, with the experience of new dishes. Overall, women define themselves as international and global (Appadurai, 1996). Food is a bridge that prevents them from losing their original culture, while experimenting and transforming their cultural customs. In the analysis, the women refer to the home as the 'home country', however, the women talk about meaningful spaces where they exchange food, cook and eat together and how these activities around food generate experiences of home in the UK. Sensorial and creative methods, which will be explained later on in this chapter, will delve into these meanings. Belonging emerged as a desire of the women to fit in with the host culture, whilst maintaining their diversity abroad. It resulted in a complex experience between feeling like an outsider, yet the desire to be an insider, which was expressed independently from the time of resettlement and in relation to different contexts (Relph, 1976). This was also due to some tough experiences that the women had in respect to race and food.

d) The women creolize their food to reinvent home and fashion geographical and racial barriers

With globalisation, the availability of foreign foodstuff has increased, which the literature states has brought the 'home' everywhere people are in the world (Pilcher, 2014). Asian ingredients are now displayed in supermarkets, and restaurants offer 'Asian' meals, although the choice remains limited. Not all original ingredients are available on the market, and the basic foods at retailers are costly; thus women cannot always afford to eat their home country's cuisine. The women are confronted with a market where 'Asian' food is not yet well known. Furthermore, the ingredients available seem to target a wide range of consumers beyond South-East Asian people. However, while migrant women encounter disruptions in their everyday life, they actively seek 'solutions'. The women replace what is missing with local foodstuffs. Their dishes result from inspiration and creativity either to create familiar 'Chinese' dishes or a new combination of Chinese flavours. Creolized dishes (Howes, 1996) are a strategy, used by the women, to adjust themselves to the new culture, find a continuity with the past, and change the present (Janowski, 2012). Interestingly, from the thematic analysis, it emerges that the women blurred the boundaries of home as a geographic unit by showing how public locations in

the host country were attuned to their own needs and were in a continuity with their original country. The women explore this continuity abroad through the embodied extensions between the home and the public spaces through food practices. Public spaces such as Chinatown, open markets, groceries, and restaurants were locations where the women went to search for a piece of home. Thus, whilst in their home country the home extended to the public through the sociality of food such as having a market near the home, having cooked food available easily, choosing the chicken for dinner, having it slaughtered and ready to cook; in the UK the women tried to generate more inclusive spaces for them. Indeed, the women's needs, aspirations and experiences continue to remain unheard and confined to the borough of their houses. One of the ways in which this exclusion is maintained is through forgetting their contribution to labour in the domestic sphere and the exclusion of their cuisine and practices from the public space in different ways. For instance, not paid labour, prejudices, the reduction of cultural places in developmental planning, the prohibition of customs in certain places. In their accounts, the women reflected upon different sensorial, spatial and social experiences of food in their own country that reveals how different cultures impact upon their well-being and settlement. For instance, food markets in their countries are described as being in continuity with their homes as they can be found everywhere, particularly the concept of open kitchens, where fresh and ready to eat food is available. Shopping for fresh food was not restricted to certain times. In this respect, different spatial organizations reflects a continuity between the private and public spaces, through the culture and socialization of food. Another example comes from the idea of 'social and sensorial economies' that the women present in their accounts. The economies of the global south are social economies, where trade, talking, rituals are part of the commensality and food preparation. In these economies the public enters into the home. Instead, the women found that the economy of the North was more impersonal, where they felt alienated and lost contact with the social life of the economy. Locations of culture, like food markets, are very special places in their countries. The women try to reduce the gap between the home and the public space as a way to generate more inclusive meanings of space for them. For instance, food gathering and food sharing is a way through which the women elaborated and constructed home as a social and public dimension. These practices always involve a certain degree of visibility (i.e. 'doing like

come on dine with me', open to public events, extending invitation to non-family members in family gatherings, celebrating in restaurants) in order to transform anonymous spaces into home. The thematic analysis showed that the women invest resources and, are economically active and creative in changing these places.

Even though there is a technological surge in China, that has changed the shopping practices of the Chinese living there (e.g. Taobao), it is interesting to note that the participants recalled the memories related to the sensorial practices of food in their country, which explains how they deliver a sense of home and security abroad. Food emerged from the interviews as an embodied experience (e.g. cravings, fill the stomach until it is full, liveliness of food) and it was talked about in sensual terms (e.g. dry, fresh, tasty). Furthermore, the women also mentioned locations, practices and referred to specific cultural elements and ingredients, that were unknown to me. Although the women found alternative explanations for them, such as a type of Chinese almond biscuits, a special mint, a kind of vegetable, a type of wine, I am aware of the losses in cultural richness and sensoriality by using this method. I felt that I needed to engage more deeply with the sensorial and material quality emerging from the accounts to give a sense of what was happening. Therefore, the lives of these women were further explored by using sensual and creative methods, which will be detailed in Chapters 8 and 9.

This thematic analysis has offered a general overview of the relocation of the Asian women to the UK. It has explored the factors, that impact their sense of place and belonging through a broad consideration of the issues that the women have reported as significantly affecting the quality of their living. The next chapter will present the ethnographic work that I have conducted with the women, by focusing on the specific area of place making through food practices. Thus, chapter 8 (the banquet), is a sensorial ethnography. The chapter, also, presents the new method, tablographies, which explores and delves into the materiality and sensuality of everyday life of the women.

Chapter 8

The banquet



Fig. 8.1 Chinese New Year in Manchester (2014). From my memory journey. Photos by author.

8.1 Playful feasting spaces

Manchester is a jovial city, which accommodates a ‘tossed salad of cultures’ (Gloor, 2005). Cultural groups, who are descendants of early and later migrants, organize spaces in the city which they now call home. The Chinese New Year (*Chunjie*, 春节), which falls between December and February each year, is one of the greatest enduring festivals in the city, celebrating the Chinese community in Manchester. On this occasion, every year, the city is packed with hundreds of people who swarm on the roads around St. Albert Square to watch the spectacular Dragon parade. They come along intrigued by the food and other amusements, which loom large in their imagination of China. The way in which Chinese people celebrate such festivals in their own homes is, however, less known. How do those who live abroad spend their festival³¹, their get-togethers when many of their family members are based in different countries, and how celebrations are set in their homes with the available resources, are worthy exploration.

In this chapter, I present an ethnography about the domestication of a semi-public space for a celebrative event. In the first part of the story I present a new method, the tablographies. I intend to explore how the women and I construct a real and imagined thirdspace (Soja, 1996), the banquet, through our food practices. Thirdspace emerges through the embodied and sensorial activities around the preparation of tables of foods. In contrast to cartographic reproduction, thirdspace constructs a sensuous geography of

³¹ Chinese New Year celebrations in China are a calendrical event and the celebrations take place for around two weeks.

space (Rodaway, 1994). I have taken photos of tables to explore the negotiations and interconnections of the women around food practices. These result assemblages and disassemblages of meanings for the perception of space and place. Through artifact and food performances, space is unearthed and liberated from the ideologies of power, but deterritorialized and re-territorialized (Jose, 2016) by the women to create inclusivity and diversity in the city. In the second part of the chapter, I engage with the literature of the senses, anthropology of food, material culture, and performance studies. I select three stories at the banquet and use a gustatory approach to explore the meanings of place emerging at the table. Aside, each story emphasizes diverse sensorial dimensions, such as 1) olfactory, and haptic 2) hearing and 3) taste. I structure these stories by using a multimethod approach (Marte, 2007, 2012). This method, uses sound and talk recordings of our discussions and, the recipes and photos, to give voice to the women. It, also, explores how home cooking is a way for us to bond with the city through our embodied memories (Marte, 2007, 2012).

9.2 The banquet as a 'third-space'

Soja's idea of 'thirdspace' (1996) is valuable to my work, to understand those emplacements of culture, remaining hidden in the intimacy of migrants' homes (Curtin, 1992; Soja, 1996; Jose, 2016). Thirdspace is a playful dimension, which allows individuals to construct a space between imagination, symbolism, and reality, while eluding the rules of secondspace. Secondspace is the dimension of ideology, whereas things from firstspace are denaturalized according to rules and conventions of one culture. For instance, forms of dwelling are fixed through the geometries of space by geographers, urban planners, and architects who while designing the city constrain people's lifestyles and movement. Firstspace is the space of material things as they are naturally placed in the world, which individuals invest with meanings. Therefore, homes are private and unexplored thirdspaces where migrants construct realities, which act as a bridge to connect them to their original homes and the host country, with creolized results (Howes, 1996; Marte, 2007, 2012; Miller, 2008). Another point of importance is the representation of home as the sphere of domesticity, and its separation from the public (Blaj-Ward, 2007). This isolates migrant women and diminishes the value of their work (Heldke and

Curtin, 1992; Yuval-Davis, 1997; Avakian and Haber, 2005; Jose, 2016). Indeed, home goes beyond the private and extends into the public, through the food practices of which women are in charge.

In the thirdspace, individuals liberally create the spaces and places where they live on their own terms as embedded in their everyday work (Soja, 1996). Here, ideological transgressions happen as the norm (Lefebvre, 1984). The feast is the epic point, where the notions of work and leisure time, public and private, and city and home, become one singular place (Lefebvre, 1973). I am interested in this third dimension. I argue that home is a playful third dimension through the work of popular foreign cuisine (DeCerteau, 1984). Home-made cooking performances involve sensorial and embodied dimensions of food, to craft the original home abroad (Mintz, 1996). Home, in this story, encompasses the private sphere, and extends to the public through the organization of the festive banquet in its sensorial form. Finally, I make the point that home is a space of resistance to the geographical fixedness of space and place, and one which is fluid, global and mobile (Massey, 1994).

8.3 The banquet as a serendipitous encounter

Food offers a ground to reinstate a sense of home for the foreign communities abroad (Law, 2001; Montanari, 2004; Marte, 2007; Longhurst et al., 2009; El-Haddad et al., 2013). The idea of the banquet came along serendipitously (Rivoal and Salazar, 2013). Some women suggested a meeting time to celebrate the diversity of our traditions, with them all being migrants in Manchester acting as a common thread. The plan turned into a celebrative banquet. Four women (who had never met each other) and I, committed together to prepare traditional foods to let 'others' taste our 'culinary landscapes' (Douglas Porteous, 1990) for Chinese New Year and Christmas, which fell very close to one another that year. This chapter will illustrate how emplacement takes different forms in a way that blurs the division between public and private through the action taken by the women and myself, and the beauty of embodied multiculturalism when performing culture.

8.4 Taking place around the table: spatial practices of food

I have developed this method called tablographies which came about as a result of sitting with the women during our ethnographic session in a common room of a university in Manchester. On a Sunday afternoon, December the 7th 2014, Mary, Maggie, and I met Helen with the other women at a secondary entrance at the university. Away from the hustle and bustle of city life, the common room was a space for us to display our cuisines, talk about our cultures, voice our experiences, network and symbolically 'travel' to different places; a space where we could think of Manchester as our home (Low, 1996, 2014; Sharpless, 2013; Vacchelli, 2014). Sensual homes of migrants are nurtured everyday by their routines and popular cuisines, but remain overshadowed by the progressive and contemporary character of modern cities (Sharpless, 2013; Jose, 2016). The banquet repurposes and overthrows the loneliness of celebrating with the 'other', and allows the women to share the vacant place that they have been left with at the table, since they arrived in this foreign country. We quietly accessed the building and snaked into the university, with the mix of stupor and concern which disorients newcomers taking their first steps in a foreign place (Stevenson, 2016), and arrived at the common room where we arranged the dishes on the tables.



Fig. 8.2 'Arrival'. Photo by author, taken the very first moment we saw the banquet. I took three sets of photos during the banquet, which outline the timeline of the event and the most salient activities happening. It ambiguously shifts between the meanings of estrangement and surprise that we feel in the moment we arrive at the common room and look at foods on the table that Helen has started to prepare, as well as the migrant arriving to an unknown city. The arrival is for Stevenson (2016) connected with place-making through embodied practices of walking the city of Manchester for the newcomers. It is, also, connected to the communities of practice which allow the students of his study to 'arrive' (set) in the full mean of the term. In the photo, some of the dishes and other stuff that we have just positioned on the tables are 'things' that organize a space in-becoming (Lefebvre, 1984).

The common room was a multi-purpose area with minimalist furniture; on one side there was a wooden kitchen with essentials like a microwave, a sink, and a fridge. On the other, there were sofas, armchairs and two small oval tables. As we set up our tables, our ordinary homely liveliness transformed the common room into our living room.

I consider the photos of table which I took as part of the dynamisms of emplacing ordinary 'spatial practices' (Lefebvre, 1984) at the banquet. Spatial practices are experiential (visual and sensorial) (Lefebvre, 1984). They are embodied (Ruminati and Foroni, 2015) and symbolic cognitions of humans who reshape and re-inscribe the spatio-temporal rhythms of their ordinary life through actions and the transformation of objects (foodstuff). These include cooking and preparations, conversations, sharing recipes and experiences, eating, and critical encounters. These make the banquet a socio-spatial (Low, 1996, 2014) and lived space (Latham, 1999), where the women engage to co-produce the socialized rhythms of their daily life (Lefebvre, 1984).

In '*Spatialising culture*', Low (1996), uses an anthropological analysis of space and, states that neoliberal ideologists, (namely cartographers, urbanists, and scientists), have prevented the formation of these spaces through modeling repressive environments. Lefebvre (1984) opposes these ruled spaces; spaces where social movement and human expression take place. In these places, spatial practices can figure as acts of defiance against the spatial disciplines of the state, in an attempt to domesticate and re-appropriate city spaces. The banquet, indeed, entails the domestication of a (semi) public space (Law, 2001; Koch and Latham, 2013). It crosses and blurs the boundaries between the private and the domestic on one side, and the public sphere on the other (Counhiam, 2009). The affirmation of women's spaces in the public is a necessity for women to bond with their city, empower their opinions, show evidence of their autonomy, and gain recognition for the value of their reproductive work as producers and transformers of food and place (Counhiam, 2009; Jose, 2016).

Work by Law (2001), offers an example of unrulid space through Hong Kong's 'Little Manila', an enclave located right in the city centre. Here, Filipino migrant women congregate on Sundays to elude the domestic work routines of their Chinese employers, and recreate their home and customs by cooking and eating their staple foods (Law, 2001). Another example of the blurring between public and domestic spaces through the cultural negotiation of dishes is demonstrated by the women street vendors of the displaced Zulu population from rural South Africa in South Durban. This population is mixed with older colonial groups from India, Portugal and England (Wardrop, 2006).

Wardrop (2006: 679), recounts how women street vendors cook their foods in the private spaces of their family kitchens, but sell those homemade meals out in the streets. They adapt their caravans to transport and reheat food, and create miniature kitchens stoves '*...having no walls or ceilings*'. The invention of these kitchens has played an important role in their empowerment as it has given them an opportunity to earn their income. Sharpless (2013), describes how women from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Waco, Texas, created a household management and recipe book as an empowering act for the re-appropriation of their congregation, which was on the brink of a financial collapse. Koch and Latham (2013) use the concept of domestication of spaces in the city, though not necessarily in relation to gender, but the idea that bringing the domestic into the public breaks the socio-cultural and political association of the 'domestic' with gender house-making. Instead, creating domestic social places in the city gives the opportunity to increase inclusivity.

Tablographies are spatialized embodied practices of food, which concern collective and individual setting of tables. In this case, they are functionally 'rebellious', and real and imagined, as evidence of the thirdspace by Soja, (1996). At the banquet, spatial food practices create a public makeshift kitchenspace (Wardrop, 2006) in the core of Manchester, where women emplace their home, cook popular cuisines, and resist their confinement to the outskirts of the city. I now turn to tablographies, where I will explain place-making through food practices.

8.5 Methodological inquiry of space: Tablographies

Part of the data which I have collected include photos, which in sensorial methods generate a debate for their strong aesthetic value. Here, I argue why and how, in tablographies, photos work effectively.

A look at the dishes on the tables reminds me of those globe charts in the atlas that I studied in school. There is a rich variety of food from everywhere. Due to the appealing and culturally diverse composition, I pretend that the dishes on the tables resemble the countries of a map (i.e. each country's traditional food acts as its representative). However, my attention is captured by the way the women concretely tell stories of their nomadism across these global-tables (Braidotti, 2002). Indeed, they trace tactile and

sensorial pathways in terms of cultural contaminations and transformations of their 'authentic' foods and tastes, which deconstruct the geopolitical mono-scalar representation of space and place in the map (Harley, 1989; Farinelli, 2009). They open up a different perspective on how we know and feel places.

Below, I have introduced a re-interpretation of the cartographic map³² through 'tablographies'. Tablographies are sets of shots, which show women's enactments around food, but they do not include the women. In this story, they recount the disposition and consumption of foods and stuff on the tables chronologically: the arrival, the presentation of the food, eating and sharing foods, and the distribution of leftover food.



Fig. 8.3 An ancient World map

³²See Mercator (1959) projection (in Schechner, 2017: pp. 41-42).



Fig. 8.4

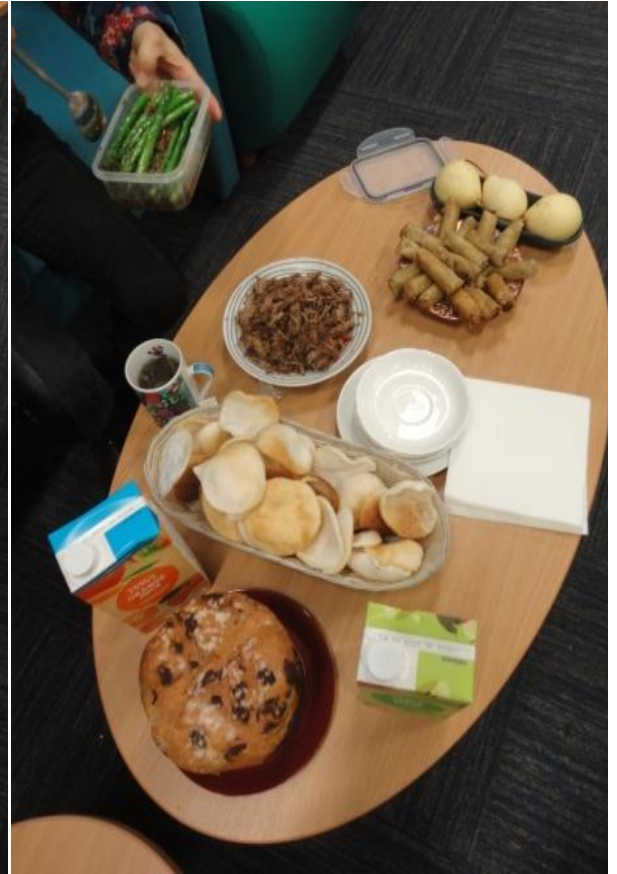


Fig. 8.5

Fig. 8.4 Tablographies: left hemisphere. The photos show tables as representations of embodied spatial practices of food. First table on the left shows a basket of *Chinese prawn crackers* (龙虾片, in Pinyin Longxia pian) and *spring rolls* (春卷, in Pinyin Chunjuan), from Helen; boxed British *mince pies* are Maggie's; dessert are my cooking, a *tiramisu* with Italian mascarpone cheese and finger biscuits sent over by my family in Italy and a *chocolate cake*; some seasoned black *grapes* from local supermarket.

Fig. 8.5 Tablographies: right hemisphere. The table on the right shows an Italian *Christmas cake* (It. *Panettone*) filled with dry fruits that Helen purchased in a local supermarket. It is inspired by the Italian Christmas traditions which she learnt when she lived in Rome for her studies. *Asparagus* and chopped *five spicy lamb* on a plate by Mary. The semolina cubes are named *Halwas*. They are a traditional afternoon tea dessert very popular in Arabic cultures, a treat from the Bangladeshi woman who was gathering with her friends at home a few hours before she came over to the banquet. There are also *Chinese Ya pears* (Yali, 鸭梨) and black grape. The fruit is typically consumed at a traditional Chinese New Year banquet in China, particularly the Ya pears. Fruit is often used as a gift when Chinese people greet and visit family and friends around this time and all the year around. Hot water and green tea are served from a kettle with the food. For Chinese it is important to maintain body warmth for digestion. Boxes of orange and apple juices are used to cheer up with plastic flutes. Rubbing of bags, jingles of beating spoons on glass containers, and smashing of porcelains cannot be seen but are part of the scene. They remind me of a mother's kitchen scene with familiar household self-soothing noises. Women are moving around the tables appreciating the food display.

The ethnographic analysis of food table settings, is a methodological inquiry into space and place-making through sensorial mapping. 'Tablographies' (literally, graphics of food tables), therefore are embodied sensorial and spatial evocations of food cultures and home. In this regard, they are a critical lens of the conventionalism of geographic maps in the definition of human space, movement, and emplacement in the world. They provide a democratic and liberal understanding of practices of migration.

8.6 Place-making in the city: assemblages and disassemblages

Place-making is a social practice for the re-appropriation of space in a city (DeCerteau, 1984). Individuals' everyday 'maps' construct diverse trajectories which shape the city on their own terms through their artwork, cooking, walking, gathering, ordinary conversations and relationships. In the same line of thought, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) envision place-making as an act of 'rebellion' against power in art and human practices. The nomad³³ is the metaphor which describes, artistically, the nature of the rhizomatic movement of humans in opposition to the State. The rhizome, is a naturally occurring underground stem which grows by developing multiple and extensive roots and shoots while expanding continuously. This movement, attributed to the nomad, entails the de-territorialization of the land and opposes the organization of the city by the State. Probyn (2000), borrowing the rhizomatic thought from Deleuze and Guattari (1987) unravels issues of home, through moving the attention to practices such as eating and the body. She considers the body as a site of connections. The body is never a fixed entity but has movement. Eating and cooking are seen as ways to extend these connections which help in making a home a socio-spatial place.

Tablographies account for the way people create emplacement within the context of ordinary living. This occurs through performances and rituals of cooking, preparation, eating, and the routes that individuals undertake to shop for their foods in the city, their physical, virtual and historical connections with the original country, and memories of people and places.

³³ The nomad is not the migrant although it overlaps to some extent. Indeed, the nomad is more an act, or an embodied movement and desire.

The tables of food which I observed at the banquet are embodied 'assemblages and disassemblages' of foodstuff, ecological practices of how women use resources of their environments. They produce new meanings of place at different levels from personal to socio-cultural, local to global and cosmological³⁴ (Tuan, 1979; Lefebvre, 2014). They have a lot in common with 'indigenous cartographies', maps graphed by the natives to perceive and represent their lands (Rundstrom, 1991; Araujo de Almeida, 1999; The Decolonial Atlas, 2017). Above all, tablographies take inspiration from foodmaps by Marte (2007) and her participants in the area of anthropology of food, migration and geography of place. Foodmaps are practices of making place and space through the connections of individuals to food. These maps record the socio-cultural relations of food, plates of food, hand drawings of the routes while they searched for ingredients, restaurants, kitchens of the past and present, food exchange and community networks, food narratives and audio-visual documentations related to food (photographs, video clips, sound recordings). These helped to construct how individuals, particularly women, continuously reinvent, stretch and expand their boundaries of home through their sensorial practices.

In a very similar stance, mapping in tablographies records the women's and mine embodiment when eating, interacting, using kitchen tools and ingredients, and the meanings which these objects and the foods take along this tasting encounter (Mintz, 1996). The 'assemblage and disassemblage' of things is defined in various contexts such as that of setting and exchanging dishes with other women, blending flavours, the sensual memories related to eating and cooking, the sounds of the kitchen, the replacement and reinvention of cultural kitchen tools, the use of local availabilities, shopping for ingredients, cooking practices, recycling, storing food and re-distributing leftovers. Thrift (2008:2), defines this movements as the 'geography of what happens', when while assembling and disassembling things, we transform the use of 'ordinary things' to reinvent place. In this fashion, disassemblages do not indicate 'destruction', but allow for new construction of meanings in a co-productive fashion (Low, 1996). Indeed, according to Lefebvre (1973), the cohesiveness of these meanings entails a flow of imagination and ideas pursued by togetherness.

³⁴Cosmologies are mythical representations of spaces used in indigenous maps. Here, women's sensual cosmologies oppose to the idea of space in traditional maps.

Tablographies offer a 'spatialised' form of place-making (Low, 1996, 2014) through the analysis of the sensorial and sensual dynamisms and the imagination entwined in individual and collective productions of place with ordinary food activities of the women who migrated to Manchester. The women re-signify a space with no borders. The elliptic shape of the tables is a symbolic infinite, whereas multidimensional worlds and places are interconnected through the dilated sense of time of their recipe-narratives, Chinese sensescapes, cultural knowledge, memories, history, and folklore and emotions.

The idea of embodied assemblages and disassemblages has been employed by Longhurst and Johnston (2013), Deleuze and Guattari (i.e. re- and de-territorializations of space), in Probyn's, 'alimentary assemblages' (in Longhurst, and Johnston, 2013: 201), and in Blackman's 'bodies as assemblages of human and non-human processes' (2012: 1) to explore space within the relationship between eating, the body, and the 'other'. These scholars agree with Probyn (in Longhurst, and Johnston, 2013: 201) who considers the body as a moving assemblage entangled in other assemblages. The bodies are elementary ongoing compositions of ethnic, gender, class, sexuality and nationality, and are entwined affectively with other bodies and objects (e.g. technologies). In this respect, they are generating movements. Drawing from these positions, the assemblages and disassemblages of 'things', through eating, cooking and other practices of everyday life, create embodied spatialities. These spaces differ from the geographical space, as movement is always implicated, and even crucial for their structuring. Through the practice of assembling and disassembling 'things' (e.g. cooking, eating), instead, the space of things is always questioned. We learn about and metabolize otherness as a complementary part of ourselves while making 'the other's things' part of our everyday lives. This is important for defining our emplacement in the world (Latham, 1999). At the banquet, '*leaving space for others' foods*', to say it in Mary's words, is about re-designing the contours of the geopolitics and opening up to a global and cosmopolitan understanding (Massey, 1994) of place, home and belonging through the sensorial incorporation of the 'other'.

8.7 Dipping into senses

The women dip in a gustatory gastro-event of their cultural differences, which are slowly digested, to make sense of the place where they live (De la Pena, 2013). It is a soft entrée into the 'exotic' alien and yet mundane tasting, aromas, sounds, and memories of women's homes. Indeed, sensoriality is the '*situated practice that can shed light on the way bodies experience different spaces of culture*' (Law, 2001: 266). Embodiment looks at the body as spatialized units, constituted of senses, nerves, and mobility, using memory, imagination and feelings to construct individuals' emplacements and lifeworld. 'Things' do not come into existence as separate entities, but are existing in the sensory perception of women (Edwards, 2000). Probyn (2000), argues the body is not just a bounded entity, but the connection of multiple bodies. Thus place results from the web through which these living bodies are interconnected either at local or transatlantic levels, whilst performing together. We navigate these sensescapes, in a room filled with aromas, sounds and flavors of the food that we prepared.

In the following sections, I present three sensorial and embodied recipes or foodie 'lifestories' (Tye, 2010), which I selected from the banquet. The first story, 'hot spicy lamb and cold asparagus', is about home as the visceral and somatic feeling of arrival in a host city. The second, 'the sounds of prawn crackers', is the evocation of home in sounds whilst the third, 'mince pies: the gust of home', is about recycling practices and meanings of home through mouthful sensations. In all the three stories, cooking and eating help the women realize the needs of belonging, affirmation and sustenance.

8.7.1 Hot spicy lamb and cold asparagus: scent and visceral remembrances of the home

At the banquet we tasted sensescapes (Porteous 1990) of women's home and their celebrations of Chinese New Year, which the women remembered while engaged in the preparation of these meals.

Sensescapes in these stories are like epiphanies, festive revelations of the sensual and embodied memory of home, through the women's recipes. I consider these recipes as foodie 'lifestories' (Tye, 2010) which evoke lived and imagined experiences of home (Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Recipes are craftwork which consent the re-appropriation of

the pleasures of home in Manchester. These account for sensorial memories, cultural knowledge, folklore, history and the materiality of women's everyday life.

I shall return to the metaphor of the assemblage and disassemblage of things to show home as a crafted place, rather than the abstract idea of space, which is far from how people practically live (Ingold, 2015). The hegemonic and neoliberal image of home consists of home as a space where people take pride in their ethnic boundaries, national identities, and/or some other political and culturally given for granted form of belonging. Within these ideas there is no place for movement, but stasis.

Indeed, individuals' ordinary practices of assemblage and disassemblage (e.g. cooking, shopping, setting tables, eating, chatting etc.) show that 'home' is not just fixed and bounded, but it is a space of creativity, possibility (Hage, 1997), and regeneration of meanings. The recipes that the women share at the banquet are not the repetition of their past (e.g. eating the home country food, following traditional habits etc.); they account for creative and personal revisions of this past that the women make, when they craft their original homes as sensorial (Seremetakis, 1996) worldspaces (Massey, 1994).

Home-making is the transient experience (Ingold, 2000) which I encounter while Mary is chatting, remembering and eating at the banquet. Cooking is the way the women and I undertake the challenge of living in Manchester, which is thought and made to be home. Mary cooked the *five spicy lamb* and *cold asparagus*, a hot and a cold dish³⁵ respectively, in line with the traditional feast eaten during Chinese New Year. These two complementary dishes showed how home for Mary was an ambiguous place. She experienced both alienation and belonging (Blunt and Dowling, 2006) in Manchester, and the dishes symbolized actions that she took to contrast the negative feelings with her personal resources. Mary was a newcomer, she only arrived in Manchester last year. When I met her, she was working in a clinic in downtown Chinatown in Manchester as a

³⁵ According to Chinese traditional medicine, food is considered for its proprieties as hot, warm and cold. Dishes are thus prepared to balance these principles, called the Yin Yang, a system of balance in Confucian philosophy. Eating appropriate food lets the body feel 'settled' to the environment.

tuina physiotherapist³⁶. Mary studied at University in Hunan, where her mother's family lived. After graduating, she relocated to Shanghai where she worked for a local import-export company. Later, she married and flew to New Zealand with her son and husband, where she lived for fifteen years. However, after divorcing her husband, she met her new partner and they moved first to Scotland, where he is from, and later to Manchester.

Mary's cuisine at the banquet embodied the visceral and somatic feelings of estrangement of 'arrival' and re-settlement in Manchester (Stevenson, 2016). These feelings are rather visceral and epidermal, related to the unpredictability, which newcomers relocating to a new place often experience. As we were in Manchester, the ever changing weather and the rigid temperatures at winter even exacerbated these feelings, while Mary was cohabiting and slowly trying to adapt. Epidermal and novel were, also, the feelings of celebrating the Chinese festivals with non familiar women. The dish was a traditional delicacy from Kunming, Southern China, where she was born.

- FIVE SPICY LAMB -

Recipe

Ingredients and procedure

'Ginger, garlic, some chilly, and five spicy powder;

use the oil to fry them a little bit, and garlic, and make the good smell.

Can you smell it?

Add some Chinese whisky! [...] Wu Liang ye³⁷ [...],

some soya sauce, a little bit of sugar, a tea spoon of vinegar [...];

then you start using a very mild fire to cook it [...]

³⁶In the tui na massage physiotherapy the hands of the practitioner put pressures on the body joints, to reduce the body's defensive Chi (Wei Qi) and stimulate a physical and spiritual energy through the muscles and the meridians of the body.

³⁷A Chinese wine made from proso millet, maize, glutinous rice, long-grain rice, and wheat.

usually we cook it like three to four hours [...]

then you get like a soup, gradually, gradually, to make the meat soft [...]

Oh but after that I will make them into pieces,

then put some garlic, ginger, onion again to fry it'

'[...] I choose the shoulder part of the lamb, I feel that the meat is more tender and sometimes it contains a little bit of fat, it is not too dry.

During the winter if you eat the lamb it can make your 'Yang' stronger,

and for the people, if they got freezing their hands and feet,

usually after they eat the lamb, they feel (body) getting warmer [...]

That's because we always considered the food as cold, warm, hot quality'.

Mary's cuisine crafted 'a naso'³⁸, recreates the scents and the 'somatic sensibilities'³⁹ (Mountcastle, 2005; Hernandez and Sutton, 2003) of her native home in Manchester. Comfort foods relate to the 'arrival' of migrants in a 'foreign' country (Brown and Mussell, 1984; Stevenson, 2016), which when unsettling feelings arise, are relieved by eating traditional foods (Seremetakis, 1996; Rabikowska, 2010). Rabikowska (2010) argues that Polish people in London cherish their home through ritualized forms of consumption of original foods to 'recapture 'normalcy', that sense of completeness and shelter while living abroad, which comes with the repetition of ordinary habits. Mary's cooking suggested sensual associations between the restoration of the original home abroad and the repetition of the 'old ways of life' (Sutton, 2001).

Indeed, the five spicy lamb evoked familiar, sensual memories of the New Year in China. Home was 'seasoned' with a blend of aromas of Chinese ingredients, textures and tastes,

³⁸'A naso' in Italian is a popular expression with a metaphoric meaning. Literally, it translates 'with the nose', but that suggests instinct too. Whilst the expression has a negative meaning, as it refers to something 'uncertain and approximate', it is still widely used by people in the sensorial practice of everyday life.

³⁹An advanced principle of organization of the senses which includes kinaesthesia, haptic and proprioception in spite of the cultural bipartition of the five senses in Western philosophy. The sensual maps of the women are clearer by adopting a reading of the senses and their multiple connections, in spite of the conventional scale adopted in the West. Senses are constructed and experienced differently in different societies (Howes, 2013).

giving rise to tactile, proprioceptive and somatic sensations. These blend of senses and memories embodied the Chinese life around this time of the year, when Mary's family used to eat the five spicy lamb to warm the body up in wintry China. The hot spicy lamb evoked physical sensations which triggered memories of the warmth of her home that Mary needed in order to get settled in Manchester (Sutton, 2001).



Fig. 8.6 'Settlement'. Photo by author. On the table, there are a range of meat (e.g. hot spicy lamb) and vegetarian dishes (e.g. cold asparagus, spring rolls, prawn crackers), fruit (Ya pears), and a cup of green tea. These are thought to provide a distribution of nutriment that balance what in Chinese philosophy and traditional medicine is called the 'Yinyang'⁴⁰ (阴阳), the harmonization of opposites, and the body with nature. The metaphor captures the need to find a way to feel at home, to harmonize with the host environment, when living in a new city.

⁴⁰ 'Ying (black) and yang (white)', explains the principle of complementary between opposite forces in life. These forces structure a dynamic system (i.e. the body) as a whole.

Mary also prepared cold asparagus.

-COLD ASPARAGUS-

Recipe

Ingredients

Asparagus

Ice cubes

Lemon juice

Oyster oil or Balsamic Vinegar

Procedure

'[...] asparagus, it's a cold dish

boil the water just like twenty seconds,

then take them out [...]

ehm then, you use all these spices, juices [...]

it's very good, put in ice, make them very cold, tasty and cold [...]

ginger, garlic, chilly uhm, some , lemon juice, a little bit of oyster oil [...]

oyster sauce, yeah, a little bit,

ehm we [sic. you] call it balsamic vinegar [in the UK]' [:158-171]

The cold asparagus recipe epitomized home as a cold but tasty place, where Mary indulged in 'social rituals reaching for transgression' (Rabikowska, 2010: p. 22). Mary's sentiments of alienation and unsettlement were reverted in the excitement of cooking for

the women at the banquet. She explored new sensual images of Manchester with the women's foodscapes.

Stevenson (2015), recalls that newcomers in Manchester use their own senses to know and make it a familiar place, and adjust to its rhythms and extravaganza. Mary re-educated the sensorial feelings of her everyday life in Manchester. As a result, home emerged as a progressive transformation of the Chinese traditions in the real and imaginary space of the banquet. Cold asparagus are not a typical Chinese New Year dish, however Mary learnt to consume cold dishes abroad. Indeed, cold asparagus was the way Mary attempted to make Manchester a more familiar place, while transforming the unsettling feelings to a palatable experience. Hage, argues that home is not only a shelter but:

...like a mother's lap it is only a shelter that we use to rest and then spring into action, and then return to spring into action again (1997: 3).

The meaning of home as shelter is reassuring, but it misses the point of the active and ongoing production of meanings that home has. Home is deeply linked to the soil as a regenerative space of growth and the naturalization of movement. Movement is represented through the natural circling of life. Besides, home is a point of departure rather than arrival. For Mary, who certainly has had an adventurous life journey, cooking practices would help her feel at home each time she 'arrived'. Home for Mary is a transient space, as her arrival in different countries has been marked by a new departure. However, it is the Chinese food that gives her the bodily comfort each time she 'arrives' to a new place. Mary's dishes embody her home as a translocal construction (Massey, 1994) through re-adapting a Chinese dish in Manchester and sharing it with non-familiar women.

8.7.2 The sounds of prawn crackers: the mythical home

Helen moved to the UK to study and work, living a sort of 'double life'[:464]. For fifteen years, she has lived far from her husband and family who are still '*there, in China, they have their own [Chinese] life as before*' [:454]. Originally from Harbin, in the north of

China, Helen spent her teens in a university campus, where family members were working as professors. She started her career in teaching at the universities around China. Later she arrived to the UK with a full scholarship to complete a Ph.D. Since then, she returned to China to become a full professor, but moved back again to Manchester, where she currently holds a lectureship position. She returns to China twice a year to reunite with her family. Helen's journey back and forth between China and Manchester is a narrative that is repetitive in the stories of migration of the Chinese women in this research.

The banquet is an extra-ordinary event for Helen, to enjoy the merriment of the Chinese festival in the UK, which is otherwise engrossed in work. Helen's nostalgia of home grows intensely, particularly during this time of the year. The Chinese festival, is the symbolic celebration of the family reunion, with the return of the members from other countries. In the UK, Helen celebrates the New Year by treating herself to some special Chinese foods in a restaurant, and joining the main celebrations in the city centre. At the banquet, Helen introduces *prawn crackers*, those crispy lunar tongues are a symbol of the new moon and good luck at Chinese New Year and the start of spring. Helen recounts that prawn crackers have been 'seen, smelled, and heard' when her mother was preparing them at home at Chinese New Year. Indeed, cooking the prawn crackers help her get into a festive mood, although she is not fond of cooking. Whilst joking about her cooking, she whispered some familiar instructions about how she prepared them.

- *PRAWN CRACKERS* -

Recipe

Ingredients and kitchen tools:

A package of shrimp powder

Frying Oil

A frying pan

Procedure

'I bought the ingredients at the supermarket. You deep fry, and they originally become this big, and then explode like that[...] on this time of year [...] When you hear the sound crack crack crack it's like ehm fireworks, they scare the ghost away and all that remain is good luck! [...] Here, listen to the sound [laugh] [...] [it is common] everywhere [...] in different part of China.' [:207-221]

Helen emplaced a mythical and archaeological⁴¹(Feld and Basso, 1996; Ben-ze'ev, 2004; El-Haddad and Schmitt, 2013) geography of home. Her recipe boosted into a soundscape featured by the expansion and crackling noises of dried starch dropped in hot oil. The stark moulds into white crunchy crisps and evokes the waxing moon at the start of the spring season. Eating prawn crackers evokes memories of Helen's Chinese neighbourhood, when streets were covered in the crackling sound of fireworks that Chinese people burst in order to defeat the unlucky spirits and bring good deeds to their families at New Year.

Embodied practices of cooking make individuals feel connected to their family, keep alive traditions and preserve cultural belonging (Nyman and Gallardo, 2007). Helen's prawn crackers ensured a continuity of the Chinese traditions in her Mancunian life. Indeed, prawn crackers in Manchester had nurturing and authentic flavors and textures of home (Abarca, 2004), and comforting acoustic reminiscences, which helped her overcome the loneliness and the silence of this event in the UK. The noisy frying, re-created a familiar and merry atmosphere that she missed in Manchester during Chinese New Year.

Women's materiality (e.g. tools and ingredients), also emerging from their sensescales, appear to be central to their memory of home. For instance, Pink (2004), argues that domestic objects are important tools to understand how people make a house their home. Places are tied together by individuals' commitment, capacities and materiality of everyday life. Thus, home is the constant work between humans and their material engagements. Besides the imported souvenirs which women preserved in their homes

⁴¹ Research of roots and fundamentals of home.

(Tolia-Kelly, 2004; Miller, 2008) and tools which they imported to cook their traditional foods, the women adapted to the local availabilities and enjoyed learning how tools and devices could be assigned with new functions and meanings. For instance, Helen used a frying pan instead of a wok⁴² to deep-fry the prawn crackers.

In contrast to consumerism, where mass-production deprive 'things' of their sensorial proprieties for economic purposes, and reduces the complexity of the human relationship with 'things' to aestheticism and functionalism (Baudrillard, 1988), the women created postconsumer cultures. Postconsumer cultures consist of the creation of symbolic spaces where cultural boundaries are stretched by transforming or re-inventing 'things' and their functions. Blending, transferring and trans-locating things regenerate new meanings of life. Things begin to have sensorial, ritual and affective functions, rather than commercial and/or 'normal'.

The women create transitional and sensorial objects of comfort (Shamsie, 2000; Miller, 2008). I call these objects domestic simulacra⁴³ (Baudrillard, 1988). Rather than being contemplative, like religious simulacra, domestic simulacra have archaeological and mythical values for the preservation and the continuity of home abroad. By archaeological, I mean the perpetual search of home, whilst the mythical is the revival of the home through memes, ideas which easily spread between people and carry cultural or practical meanings. They are objects belonging to their ordinary life-spaces, 'common' stuff filled with values. By cooking with a frying pan, instead of a wok, Helen readapted a Chinese tradition in Manchester by appropriating the local culture to her own needs (Miller, 2008). Thus, China for Helen was never the place she had left but a 'translocal place' where she was continuing to live from afar (Massey, 1994).

Bender (1993) writes about landscapes, stating that they are not just 'views', but places where spaced, embodied, and subjective encounters happen. Indeed, it was the collective engagement of the women, which made Helen cook from scratch for them. The women at the banquet emplaced the Chinese people of Helen's neighbourhood in China. Thus,

⁴² This is a round-bottomed cooking vessel symbol of the Chinese cooking. Its large shape and the convergence of the bottom with the flame of the Chinese cooker, optimizes the stir-frying and avoids burning the food.

⁴³ Simulacra are cultural objects and relicts that any society invests with meanings of the own civilities.

these domestic objects take their creole meanings from the mutual encounter with the 'other', which then manifests in the meal (Douglas, 1966). Sharing prawn crackers with foreign women unfolded the challenging experience of remaining in Manchester for the Chinese New Year and the unexpected inclusion of unfamiliar women in the celebration.



Fig. 8.7 'Foodpolitanism'. Photo by author. This photo is part of the second shot. It illustrates diversity that we encounter while living in Manchester. 'Foodpolitanism' tackles the limits of cosmopolitanism, that Bhabha (in Huddart, 2006) defines as an aggregate of different ethnicities. A sense of belonging to the world is expressed through spatial embodied practices of food against the 'power-geometry of space-time compression' (Massey, 1994). Encountering diversity, here, is emphasized by women's foodscapes. In the photo the *Halwa*, a South-Asian dessert made from bulks of semolina, from a Bangladeshi woman, emphasizes belonging through eating the other's food. The spatial practices of offering *Halwa* shows foodpolitan spatial evocations and the creation of social spaces without compressions, as the ones delimited by the geographical barriers. The foodpolitan table gives the opportunity to experiment different levels of mapping, from personal to social to cosmological.

Home results in a lived space created by homemade practices, routines and the ever-changing life of women. By tweaking the function of ordinary objects, transforming and reinventing original customs and practices, blending together elements of different traditions, the women and I shaped and pushed the boundaries of home to the idea of a translocal and liminal place (Massey, 1994; Braidotti, 2011) within the encounter with the 'other'. Through these relationships we recognized ourselves as being part of the place we lived in, which led to our attachment to the city (Latham, 1999). Helen's sonorous, sensual, and mythical landscape was re-staged in Manchester together with the women. By eating prawn crackers, the women participated in the saga of sounds of the feast and they gave new sounds to the Chinese New Year, not compounded by ancestral absences, but by the presence of the new people. The nostalgia of the Chinese sensescape at New Year, was filled with the overlapping laughs, the foreign and creolized accents, emotions, sensations, relationships, and experiences of the women living in Manchester.

8.7.3 The gust of mince pies: recycling at home

Maggie who spent more than fifteen years in Manchester, has adopted some of the local traditions. Maggie is originally from Hong Kong and moved to London to study art when she was still a teenager and has now settled in the UK for more than ten years. Whilst in the UK, Maggie was inspired to publish her poetry and work as a freelance artist, and continued being an activist and a women's and human rights advocate.

A packet of *mince pies* is what she brought to the banquet. Mince pies, a British delicacy, are filled pastries, that are available in every local bakery or supermarket during Christmas. Every woman at the banquet was asked to introduce her dish. When it was her turn, Maggie presented us with a set of instructions that helped us become familiar with a costume that we did not know much about.

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- MINCE PIES -

Recipe

Ingredients and tools

A package of stuffed mince pies

Yogurt

An oven

Procedure

'[...] and it's very fruity, they use dried fruit ehm to make [...] the stuffing [...] I think (..)

many of them are ehm raisins [...] other dry fruit [...]

I think they might have something like cinnamon [...]

if you are at home you can put it in the oven, heat it up,

and then you can put some yogurt on top [...]

because it's sweet so you need the yogurt to balance the flavor [...]

I collect these tin foil at the bottom, so that I can make cakes [...]'. [:45-65]

Maggie's recipe recounted us Manchester as being her home through her recently discovered passion for mince pies. Bringing mince pies to the Chinese New Year banquet was a tasting and textural choice that combined Maggie's attachment to the Chinese and British cultures, while the women and me relieved memories of a Manchester that was more familiar to us. By embracing the local practices, Maggie's choice illustrates the coexistence of the 'adopted' and original home through the flavour of sweetness of the dried fruits and the hint of cinnamon, which is balanced by the acidity of the yoghurt. The sweet and bitter bites were reminiscent of the history of Hong Kong as a colony of Britain from 1841 to 1997 and followed by the Chinese sovereignty till recent times. Hong Kong as a colony materializes through the sugar and the spices, the golden goods imported

from the East by the colonisers (Mintz, 1996; DuBois, et al., 2008). The acidity of the yoghurt on top of the mince pie represents the disruption of the sweet dreams of Hong Kong people to be an independent country after the British government left. The mince pie represents these complicated encounters between the colonisers and colonised that Maggie has resolved and eroticised by consuming something that is part of a Western tradition in a Chinese banquet, similar to her desire of finding independence by embracing British culture whilst maintaining her Chineseness. Home, for Maggie, is neither an in-betweenness (Miller, 2008), a compromise that she could make between Hong Kong and Manchester. Home is also not a hybrid dimension (Bhabha, 1994) that entwines the two places as being indistinguishable from each other. These ideals describe a representational home, one that is frequently reported in the geographical knowledge.

Instead, Maggie departs these locations and through an ecological re-making of home, she advocates home as something beyond the geo-political disputes. The art of crafting her own home through the sensual, material and engagements with foodstuff is what Maggie demonstrate at the banquet. Home, for Maggie, is a mundane process entwined with everyday food practices, materialities and a certain '*degree of dwelling*' (Hay, 1998, p. 6). Thus, Maggie's recipes continue with her collecting the tin foils on which the mince pies are placed in the box and recycled them to make her own baking equipment. Recycling is an empowering domestic practice. Apart from it being a strategic way to reduce the cost of cooking and manage finances abroad, it is also a bodily and sensorial mechanism of survival and adaptation, it links to the sensual transformation and the revitalization of 'things' in everyday life. It talks about women's re-productivity and their ability to regenerate life. Things that have been used for a specific function and meaning in everyday life are given a new existence through recycling practices, and they promise new sensorial experiences and convey new semiotics of everyday life. Especially, on this occasion, they show how Maggie re-created her home abroad.



Fig. 8.8 'Recycling'. Photo by author. This is the end of the banquet and the women are about to finish and pack things back for home. The tables show movements at the level of disassembling the order of things. In the banquet, recycling 'things' (e.g. foods and foodstuff) sheds light on the expansion of networks of connection between the women, whereas the food is re-distributed and taken home, creating human connections and creolization of domestic spaces. Against the conventions employed in geographic and topographic representations of space and place, sharing foods and goods, crafting and remaking things, which are passed over to others, creates movement in a space which is open without borders and rules. In tablographies, the 'trashed' is part of the logic of reproduction and recycling of space (Lefebvre, 1984). The banquet is an extemporal experience/performance, as the time we spent at the banquet is a kind of recycled time. Indeed, the banquet is not only an event which happens within five hours, but goes far beyond that. Indeed, the left food at the banquet finds a place elsewhere, since it has been shared and taken home by the women. The leftovers (Watson, 2014), open up to a net of connections which extends beyond the located encounter with the women at the banquet, to arrive into their homes where the food will be shared on another table (e.g. *'let me bring some to my kids'*) and will employ different stories.

Maggie's recipe started as instructions of how to heat and eat a mince pie. Nevertheless, Maggie reframed these instructions within the practice of recycling, giving life to things in her own way. Likewise, she stated that baking mince pies using an oven is something she became familiar with while living in Manchester. The oven is a modern Western cooking

appliance which is becoming popular with the advancement of the globalisation of East Asia and the commodification of Asian kitchenspaces⁴⁴. Through the incorporation of local customs into the Chinese New Year celebrations, the sharing of mince pies with women, and the use of tin foils to bake her own cake, Maggie 'recycles' new meanings of place and history. The recycling of meanings, materials, and the exchange of foods, changes the colonial histories to a new narrative. These old and repetitive plots that disempower and turn migrants into clichés are reworked through the voice and home practices of women. Manchester is made a home through the recycling patterns that she and the women enhance everyday by living in this city. Home is the revitalization of traditions and practices through assembling and disassembling 'things', to create spaces of freedom beyond the geographical positioning of the individuals. Maggie finds her space in consuming mince pies and recycling the cake tins. As a counter-reply to the consumerism of old plots of Hong Kong as a colony, she deploys space in different ways than the ones proposed by the traditional geography.

8.8 Digestive thoughts

In traditional geography, space is naturally discontinuous and fragmented through lines and colours which mark and enclose the countries in a map. The idea that each society occupies a space and embodies a different culture is engraved in how individuals know the world by virtue of ethnic and geopolitical representations (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). However, the banquet seems to disconfirm the ruptures of space and cultures and proposes a sensorial place. A sensorial place is a place in becoming, or subjected to the transformation of individuals through their ordinary practices, beyond their cultural belonging.

The transient and transnational nature of food allows women to build their settlement abroad. Tablographies take into account how through sensual, embodied, and creolized practices of space people create enabling environments (Duff, 2009). These are spaces of

⁴⁴ Traditional Chinese kitchens have a hot plate hob and not an oven. Recently, Chinese people are also using microwaves to re-heat their food (see Appendix III, my journey to China, photo 12.1 of this thesis).

self-expression (Latham and McCormack, 2007; Cresswell, 2004) and care (Duff, 2009), which are especially important to migrants to bond with the place that they inhabit.

In the work of geographers and planners, there are geographies of the home, still unexplored, unseen, unconsidered that re-textualize the city (DeCerteau, 1984; Jose, 2016). These geographies change the way humans attend to spaces and places. The geographies that the women and I created are not those produced by the geographic, tourist and food industry. Instead, they are hidden geographies of home. From a bounded and grounded event, the banquet became an open and global tridimensional space (Malpas, 2012) with recipes as women's vernaculars. The creolized language of the kitchen encourages sensory self-consciousness and reveals how individuals talk and feel about their home. Revealing women's voices helps in understanding the urban culture of space and place, and how migrant women who relocate abroad are entangled with the production of the cities, and their economies and their contributions to migration (Jose, 2016).

Chapter 9

The market

9.1 Overt(o)ure⁴⁵

Overt(o)ure is the opening move into the ethnographic sensorial tour that Amelie and I play in sounds and moves. Our tour was to the Leeds Kirkgate market, and took place on 18th November, 2015. The market is in the South-Eastern part of the town, twenty to thirty minutes walking distance from where we live.

This ethnography is a geo-anthropological study of the home, and the emotional and sensorial spatial practices of health relating to migrating in another country (Davidson and Milligan, 2004; Dyck, 2006). It is a priority for Amelie to feed herself fresh and healthy foods, as her mother taught her, while considering her budget. That is why she walks a fair distance to the market every week-end or at least every fortnight, where she says to find many discounts; and is a place which evokes memories of home.

Home is the place where we first learn about food (Plaza, 2014; Abarca, 2004). Especially, our experience of food is usually linked in a very special way to our mother's body and cooking (Abarca, 2004)⁴⁶. One's mother is indeed a physical comfort through the transmission of feelings of love, also through food (Kristeva, 1989). Away from one's home country, the lack of homemade original cuisine and its cost, can result in discontent, disconnection, nostalgia, and homesickness (Marte, 2007, 2012). Amelie has learnt to 'survive' in the UK, by enhancing her mother's ecological food practices (Shiva, 1992).

There is a link between feeling healthy, eating one's own prepared foods, and home (Dyck, 2006; Longhurst et al., 2010; Lee, 2015). Healthy eating would include shopping the fresh and traditional ingredients in migration, cooking original dishes, and also having

⁴⁵ The meaning of 'overture' in the dictionary is given as an opening move for a new relationship or agreement; in music is the introduction to an opera; and in literature is an introductory part of a poem or prologue. Here, overture covers all these meanings. Particularly, through the symbolic parallel between walking choreographies, sounds at the market, and poetic allusions.

⁴⁶ I use the word mother, instead of caregiver or parent, in this context. Amelie, and in general the women of this study, mention their mother, rather than anybody else, in their experiences of food and home abroad.

a market nearby where migrants live (Davidson and Milligan, 2004; Dyck, 2006; Lee, 2015). These practices ease relocation whilst giving the feeling of home (Plaza, 2014).

Ecological food practices are a philosophy and politics borrowed by post-colonial and eco feminist activists who oppose the Western ideology of progress (Shiva, 1992). According to a common idea of progress, poverty is defined as a condition of not having new commodities. However, some cultures are happy with satisfying their own basic needs with a few resources; these would include eating the products harvested in their own land (Christie, 2006). I found that this idea of conducting a life with 'less', actually applies to the culture of most of the Chinese women who took part in the study. It certainly matches the Confucian philosophy, which teaches an appreciation of the simplicity of food. The experiences of the Chinese famine still seem to have a strong influence in the way some Chinese families manage their household, with respect to food and lifestyle in China.

For Amelie, a student in the UK coming from a wealthy Chinese family, shopping preserves the habits of her Chinese town, which is in a developing area of inner China. In her family, traditional food practices such as cooking meals from scratch and shopping for fresh groceries everyday have been preserved by her mother. Thus, Amelie maintains and repeats these habits in the UK, which makes her feel at home, since they are based on her mother's household managing, cooking, and the memories of those senses (Semerakitis, 1994; Sutton, 2001; Holtzman, 2006). The practices that Amelie re-enacts abroad consist of budgeting her own shopping, shopping and cooking fresh ingredients, and not wasting food.

The yearning for the mother's dishes abroad is about the need of comfort and security that homemade dishes and familiar flavors transmit when people feel uprooted (Marte, 2012; Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos, 2014). Eating is not simply an act of survival, but it is entwined with the needs of belonging (Semerakitis, 1994; Sutton, 2001; Marte, 2012). Food ecology is indeed extremely important for Amelie to reproduce these feelings of security and home. Belonging and home are physical, visceral and emotional states (Tuan, 1972; Longhurst, 2010). Here, I adopt a naturalistic and maternal perspective, by combining geographies of the environment (Tuan, 1979; 1975) and the

senses (Tuan, 1972) with developmental psychology (Winnicott, 1971, 1986;; Burman, 1995; Kristeva, 1983) and feminist theories of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 1997; Abarca, 2004).

In developmental psychology, this visceral feeling of security starts inside the mother's womb through the nurturing relationships that the mother provides to the infant (Winnicott, 1971, 1986; Kristeva, 1983, 2014). The mother plays a catalytic role. Through the food that the mother eats, her emotions and sensations, and later her labour (love) in the kitchen (Abarca, 2004), she provides a feeling of health, security, and warmth, which the baby needs in order to 'migrate' to the external world where it will become an independent self (Kristeva, 1983; Tuan, 1974). The place that the mother provides to the baby is purely visceral, sensorial, and affective through satisfying her physical and emotional needs of security.

Tuan (1974), argues that our first relationship with the environment is constituted by human perception. Infants have a sensorial emplaced nature in the world for their biological ability to respond to stimuli (Tuan, 1974). Drawing from Tuan's (1974) humanistic, pedagogical, organic and ecological view of the world, I argue Amelie's and my personal experience of the market is purely perceptual, as the infant.

Sense of home for Amelie is a visceral and embodied experience which is built through the travelling and 'travailleur' (labour)⁴⁷ of a migrant woman who is in search of her place abroad. Metaphorically, this travelling resembles the experience of birth, from the bodily experience of the mother's womb to an independent self and woman, from the secure place of the womb to being projected in the world (Kristeva, 1983).

Amelie as an adult, reviews and changes her mother's cooking according to her budget, local availabilities, and her cooking skills, which is the way she negotiates her bodily relationship of identification-differentiation with the mother to find her place in the world. By reinventing the Chinese traditions and new meanings of home in the UK, Amelie secures her place abroad (Parasecoli, 2014).

In this story, the market is symbolically interpreted as a womb. First, the circular motions that Amelie and I walked within our 3-hour tour through the hallways of the market, reminded me of a baby floating in the amniotic sac of the mother. While walking, our

⁴⁷In Italian, *travailleur* reads and sounds as 'travaglio' or childbirth labor.

bodies described transits and pathways of the market by returning to the same points. The repetition of mundane⁴⁸ practices, whilst walking through and returning to the same places, is the way we change the meanings of these spaces (Low, 2014) through an experience that generates comfort. Sensorial mapping (Marte, 2007; Pink and Mackley, 2012) describes the way individuals settle in a place and make home. These maps are made by trivial signs, materiality, and the sensorial which describes the land as a rhizomata (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) movement in our embodied spaces (Low, 2003). Second, the market is a place where senses are awakened by the vital space of life of people who are selling and purchasing foods. Touching, smelling, and hearing, while navigating the market's eco-niches, and its soundscapes, evoke the experience of a baby in the womb. The flavoured amniotic fluid transmits the echo of the reality to the baby through the senses of the mother.

The importance of migrants' food practices related to soil is widely documented. Food activities such as harvesting (Hage, 1997; Kalcic, 1984; Morgan, Rocha and Poynting, 2005; Tomkins, 2014), streetfood trade (Johnson, 2006), shopping in local markets (Imai, 2010), and cooking (Law, 2001; Longhurst et al., 2010; Marte, 2012), describe the earthy and sensual handiwork of individuals transforming the 'foreign' land (and its products) into spaces of comfort and home. Sensorial mapping, or sensual, experiential, emotional experiences of space and place generated by the individual, is therefore the way Amelie and I reinvent place while constructing a sense of well-being and security abroad through shopping for ingredients at the market.

I use an assemblage of data collected using different methods: video tour, photos, sound-files and fieldnotes. The reason for employing different methods at the market depended on the policy related to filming in certain spaces (i.e. shops), and the activities that we were engaging in. For instance, video recording the entire tour as a participant in the ethnography who is also shopping required me to employ certain techniques.

⁴⁸The use of 'mundane' instead of ordinary practices is on purpose. The mundane has a critical connotation for critical psychologists who are trying to change the negativity attached to the term in relation to ordinary life and non conformism. Here, the adjective mundane is a symbolic association with the home, and the woman's pregnant body and the practices of feeding, usually seen in ambiguous ways and disqualified in public.

The reader will be following our ‘foodsteps’ through a multi-sensorial experience of shopping which embraces the principles and sentiments of ecology and household management of a Chinese student abroad. Amelie and I emplace our homely routines by marking the place with sensual memories of home, generational knowledge, and navigating and designing embodied and sensorial mapping of the market.

I see a reflection of my experience through Amelie’s routine, both as a migrant student and a daughter who has left her home to relocate in the UK. Furthermore, between conducting and writing this ethnography, I became a mother myself, which has influenced the way I think retrospectively about my experience at the market (see in Chapter 6 and Chapter 12 my reflexive journey). My experience throughout the narration comes through a phenomenology of the heart (Pelias, 2004; Owen, 2017), in which I use the metaphor of the baby and her mother.

This story is divided into three sections. They are spaces that are created by the embodied, sensorial and affection of Amelie’s food practices, respectively. The first is the entrance on Vicar lane. I start this story from here, by describing our experience of circular navigation of the market, and introducing the embodied and sensorial mapping and the metaphor of the market as a womb. Second, is the Chinese rotisserie, a transitional space, and place of memories and creolization. Third, is the courtyard, where Amelie does her shopping and emplaces her mother’s habitual routines to change them and create her home in the UK.

9.2 The entrance on Vicar Lane: foodsteps

The market is an ancient building first opened to the public in 1857 (Leeds City Council, 2017). One of the entrances is on Vicar Lane, with the access to the oldest part of the market, where vendors display and trade various items such as food, clothes, flowers, jewelry, gadgets, furniture and household ‘stuff’. The stalls are located one after the other in an intricate maze of corridors.

In this part of the story, I describe Amelie’s ordinary experience of shopping at the market. I intend to impart the idea that a geography of home is made by people’s

everyday reproductive work (Christie, 2006), which is the embodied, experiential and emotional engagement that individuals have with space.

I grasp my camera that I use to film the paths that we undertake, while we are in the market. I record the physical and sensorial engagement with the environment, and account how Amelie *performs* her shopping in line with her knowledge, gut, and her sensorial memories of her mother's food in China. When I start filming, I realize that I have inadvertently turned my camera on the pavements and the focus has become the paths that Amelie and I follow while hunting for food. This discovery makes me realize how central footsteps are to the spatiality of social life and home (DeCerteau, 1984; Lefebvre, 2004; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008).

These activities (walking and shopping) are recorded by drawing sketches on paper to illustrate the paths that Amelie and I walk while in the market. I compare these circling paths to a baby in a womb. Indeed, the circling aesthetics (see Fig. 1) evoke it, as well as the multisensorial and affective experience at the market recalls the primordial experience of life in becoming of a baby in the womb.

The idea of sketching phenomenological mapping in this research comes from Hackett (2014) and Stevenson (2016). Hackett (2014) draws on paper children's movements in British museums to evaluate their lively use and movements in the space (see Chapter 7). This supported the creation of comfortable and creative experiences of space in museums for the children. Stevenson (2016), utilized the technique of sketching sensorial maps of Manchester while walking through different food ambiances like a fruit market, a Mediterranean restaurant, a donut shop, and a retro clothes emporium from where the participants and he crafted commemorative postcards (see Chapter 7). Besides, another inspiration is the fascinating work of cultural anthropologists and geographers on indigenous (Feld and Basso, 1996; Hay 1998; Araujo de Almeida, 1999) and imagined geographies (Said, 1979). In '*Wisdom sets in place*', Feld and Basso, (1996), argue that the Western Apache people in Cibecue, in east-central Arizona, conceive their places in terms of paths and trails. The Apache describe place as a state of mind which they learnt while being in motion between places. Moreover, I also draw from Pink and Mackley's (2012) ethnography of the domestic consumption of energy in the homes of British people. They

employed home video-tours in which they explore how households utilize objects and other commodities to create a warm and comfortable experience of home.

Below I attach the photo of my sketch about sensorial and embodied circling mapping of the market:

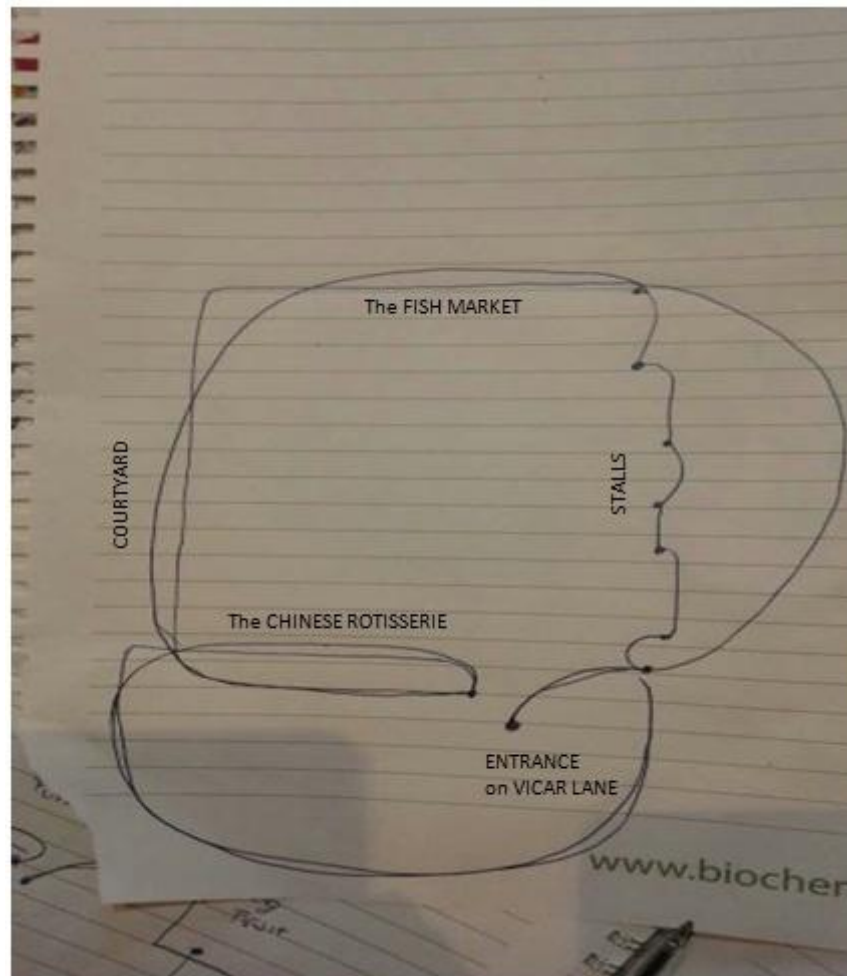


Fig. 9.1 The womb. My sketch of embodied and sensorial map of the market. Shopping at the market is a visceral experience of containment similar to a baby life growing in a womb. Bounding with place like the mother with her baby through our sensorial experiences.

We start from the fruit stall and proceed to different areas in a circling impulse which the following story will describe. I walk the habitual paths that Amelie usually beats when she goes food hunting at the market. Amelie is looking for the best offer, as she has to budget her money as a student. At the same time she cares about the freshness of the ingredients, which she uses to cook her healthy meals. She guides me around, showing me what and from where she usually purchases her ingredients, and how she will use

them to cook her meals. This is how she manages to make her living a secure place. Indeed, having a sense of place corresponds to 'secure bases' (Bowlby, 1988). Secure bases are theorised in the attachment theory by Winnicott (1971). They concern the ability of the mother to be respondent to the child's needs, whether in terms of nourishment, this would be affect and love, food or either the two of them (Kristeva, 1989). The nurturing and secure sense of home that the mother transmits to her daughter through food (Curtin, 1992; Kristeva, 1989) is re-staged through the emotional, sensorial and embodied practice of shopping healthily at the market.

We gradually move towards the southern direction. As spatialised bodies, we merge into the space, and shape it through our walks and mundane food practices (DeCerteau, 1984). Footsteps for DeCerteau (1984) are practices of space, which operate within an anthropological and poetical spatiality. Foodsteps, and the way they disperse in space through our movements while we search for food, let the multiforms and sensual expressions that reality can take to our eyes and bodies emerge. Foodsteps oppose to the geometrical and geographical doctrines of visual spatialities, which instead represent place as a static scene, and individuals as estranged from its production.

Foodsteps, for me, are unique personal modes through which individuals are rooted in place. Despite the large attention on the visual, and more recently on the other senses in the geography of home and place (Sutton, 2001), footsteps have been given relative consideration for the way they work to set up home, and not just bring us at home (Thrift, 1997; Thrift and Dewsbury 2000; Stevenson, 2016). DeCerteau (1984) argued that the way individuals use their kinesthetic, haptic and orientation have a great importance for how they know place and make home. One of the peculiar qualities of foodsteps is that they do not have localized qualities, rather they are:

...no more inserted within a container than those Chinese characters speakers sketch out on their hands with their fingertips... (DeCerteau, 1988: 161).

Amelie and I walk throughout the market. Our foodsteps rolls like paintbrushes soaked with ink on to the pavement to design pathways which spread around into a human logic: they are migrational, transitional, and metaphorical (Decertau, 1984).



Fig. 9.2 Entrance on Vicar Lane, foodsteps. Photo from the market video-tour.

Foodsteps are seen for the way that they distribute individuals to the land (Braidotti, 2011), rather than perceiving rooting as a fixed point of the individual in the land. Those foodsteps are, thus, contextualized as drawings on the ground (Hackett, 2014), which show how we construct home while moving. Sense of home is mobile (Braidotti, 2011; Massey 1994); contrary to the principle of rooted and stable homes, roots are spreading and growing and taking nourishment from everywhere.

Steps have unique qualities, which characterize how people ground and root in place (DeCertau, 1984). I realize that Amelie's and mine are synchronic. We do not need to make a decision of where we want it to lead, it is just naturally as it has always been while shopping on my own. This is a familiar pattern for me; passing through the food stalls, stopping, glancing to the price signs, thinking about price, and walking by. We might return twice to the same stall before making a choice of food. We sneak left and right through the lined row of stalls and punctuate the space with the rhythms of our daily journeys (Lefebvre, 2004). If a musician could play it in music, that would be a heartbeat of a baby in the womb, a sign of life.



Fig. 9.3. Ballets. On the left, hanging women clothes evoke dancing bodies. Photo from video.

Seamon and Nordin (1980), who study how people construct place through observing the movement of people in certain spaces like markets in Stockholm, describe these activities as ballets. Ballets are synchronic and rhythmical movements which happen to be coordinated within a space and time. They change throughout the time and move as choreographed to the space that they construct. This way, places result from spatialised forms given by people's everyday routines and rhythms. I borrow from Seamon and Nordin (1980), the idea of body ballets and apply it to Amelie's and my performance at the market.

Soundscapes accompany our pedestrian walks throughout. The radio plays classic tunes in the background, invoking a relaxing experience, while voices and noises of trading roar and chase all around. They resonate in the market like the charming sound of the sea waves echoed through the seashell. These voices and noises come back to us amplified, they are fossil soundtracks of a life that has gone over for decades. This suits the metaphor of the relation between the mother and the baby in the womb. The mother's perception of the reality echoes into the amniotic sac through her ordinary rhythms.

Amelie and I 'dance' through the market, as our bodies are *performing* activities which appear to be coordinated with the others: searching for food, taking it, paying, exchanging pennies, thanking and leaving.

At the end of the corridor, we take a left and enter 'the fish market', which is toward the east. It feels cold here and the floors are wet all around.



Fig. 9.4 The meteor-ceptive market. The bend before entering in the 'fish market'. The photo evokes wet footsteps and a cold space. Photo from video.

The 'fish market' is a column of four stands that display tubs of fish of all sorts. There are large basins with tens of chopped fish heads that Amelia would, usually, buy for her soup at a cost of 50 pence per head. Surprisingly, the 'fish market' does not smell of fish at all. The odour of the sea is masked by meat stands, which are on the opposite side, airstreams coming from the adjacent sliding doors, and the heating and blowing hot air from a large oven which roasts chicken and potatoes a few meters in front of us. Our footsteps make a sense of home, according to the 'meteorological and meteorceptive ambiances' which we experience when walking through different areas of the market. Vannini and Taggard (2014), call it thermoception, a mechanism of survival which entails the way individuals feel and regulate the heat and cold in their bodies.

Like the baby, who feels the world through the womb, which is made of skin and visceral perceptions of the mother; the market is like a womb where unpleasant experiences of displacement are thermoregulated (Vannini and Taggard 2014; Allen-Collinson and Owton, 2015) and transformed into feelings of warmth and security.

As Tuan (1974) argues, humans respond to stimuli beyond the five senses scale, which organize the geography of the world. A geography of skin makes our perception of security and well-being come alive, whereas our prehensile extremities, such as feet and hands, become particularly and acutely sensitive, and can feel what it is not reachable through the eyes.

Suddenly, Amelie recalls the Chinese rotisserie where she usually buys roasted meat. She heads towards the northern sliding doors, which face the courtyard. We take a left and get lost in the hallways, which looks like a labyrinth. I realize that we walked by circling the market. We are now back to the corridor that leads to the first stall. I glimpse an arcade of red bricks where shops appear in a row. The Chinese rotisserie is the first shop on our left, next to the English butcher, and opposite the Polish bakery. While wandering around the market in circling paths, it reminds me of the movement of the baby into the mother's womb. It does feel not like someone who is wandering homeless. Instead, it is the sense of containment and security, which we feel comes from the memories of food, the skin temperatures, the echoes of sounds and voices, to which Amelie and I became acquainted every time we shop at the market.

Foodsteps are kinesthetic, thermoceptive and sonoric signs that humans leave while walking. It is more or less a visible mark that represents a part of their story while rooted in a place (Stevenson, 2016). At the market, we metaphorically jot down our story, while foodsteps wave like sounds and spill a trace of us that will continue to be a part of those pavements. Here, thousands of other foodsteps have passed, and stories have been told when people left the market after their daily shopping.

9.3 The Chinese rotisserie

In this section, I recount the emotional geography of home (Caldwell, 2006; Brickell, 2012; Plaza, 2014). First, I am inspired by the nostalgic memories of the Chinese commensality that Amelie recalls when going to Maxi's rotisserie. Second, I look at the transformations of material life in the diasporic reconstruction of home abroad. Besides, home as a sensorial and emotional link to the mother, its semiotic value (Kristeva, 1983) through mundane spatialized practices of food, and the place of 'things' (Plaza, 2014) is also considered. Indeed, the objects that people use to display their 'place-affections' are significant to evoke trans-emigrational memories of place.

Maxi's rotisserie appears to be a place signalled by a series of visual, yet evocative elements, which show an example of how the Chinese entrepreneurs have Anglicized

their shops in the UK. Maxi's rotisserie is a typical Chinese takeaway. It has a big green sign with the name typed in English and in Chinese. Big sized photos of food at the top are used to advertise the dishes to attract the customers. A lit sign which reads 'open', recalls those small signs that diasporic grocers almost shyly hang up at their doors. Flagged manifestos which sponsor local events are stuck at the bottom wall of the shop. The shop caters for birthdays too, and a picture in Chinese describes how to order a birthday cake. Through the fogged windows, I spot a Pepsi distributor, a symbol of Western globalisation. Chinese red lanterns hang on the ceiling, together with roasted animals. The paper menus on the window show a small range of combo boxed foods, written in English and Chinese.



Fig. 9.5 The Chinese rotisserie. My shopping trolley in front to the shop. Photo by author.

Maxi's rotisserie is an evocative place, which reminds Amelie of her family, where sometimes she buys meat cooked in the Chinese way.

Amelie can not always afford to eat meat in a Chinese restaurant in the UK. However, she explains that meat in her family is highly prized as a healthy food, due to the fact that it is costly and only wealthy families can afford to buy it frequently. In her family, meat represents '*the good life*'. The roasted meat at Maxi's is a calculated compromise of eating the meat while having the elements of a home-made style meal. This avoids having

to clean, chop, and cook the meat by herself, which besides being time-consuming, requires skills that she does not possess.

'I always chose this [points at the menu on the window glass] because they provide three varieties, it is like £5.80 but I will like take home, and eat for two times, three times, because it's lots of meat [...] they already cut it [...] you can't eat all, even feel so oil [...] Yeah, because I will like cook vegetables by myself and with the meat [...] yeah, they roast it [meat] it's quite nice. And also you can chose with rice one [points at the menu the roasted pork with rice], but it's a little meat so I prefer to cook the rice by myself [...]'.

[from video]

Eating roasted meat at Maxi's is a way Amelie has found as an alternative to buying and cooking meat as well as budgetting the cost of meat. As the portion of meat is quite big, she divides it into three meals. This allows Amelie to still have the variety of foods that a proper Chinese meal would require, and her family would traditionally have in China. Therefore, Amelie buys and brings the meat home. She also fries some vegetables as side dishes and cooks the rice herself.

The Chinese takeaway is a transitional place for Amelia (Plaza, 2014; Winnicott, 1971). It allows her to eat a variety of meals that she cannot cook abroad, preserves her family's beliefs, and the taste of her mother's cooking in the UK. Amelie knows that the food here is not healthy as her mother's, as *'it feels so oily'*, but as long as it is sliced and fried in the Chinese way, and she adds her cooking to it, she feels it will make it feel like a homely meal. Amelie, does not buy the rice package at the rotisserie. Instead, she usually buys twenty kilogram sacks from a Chinese grocer at the market, divides the bill with her flatmates to reduce the costs, and takes the advantage of having it delivered free of cost at home.

Amelie's home-making is about the ecological practices of survival in the UK, a way she reviews the rules of the market, budgets the costs of the Chinese food, and creates her own affective, sensorial and creative shopping to make a place abroad.

Transitional space and the objects that inhabit these spaces (i.e. the foods and the tools for cooking it, as well as the environment of the Chinese rotisserie) are Winnicottian

(1971) elements of the psychoanalytic view of human's emplacement. Infants discover the world through the sensorial relationships with the objects, before they speak complex linguistic meanings. Emplacement for Winnicott (1971) is about the infant's development of a sense of security in the exploration of the world and security to be in a place alone when the mother is not around. Through the selection and utilization of some of these objects, which work specifically as surrogate of the mother, the memory of the mother is, thus, evoked in the sensual experience that the infant develops with some of the objects. Similarly, migrants develop sensorial relationships with particular objects (i.e. cooking tools, ingredients, souvenirs) which resonate the memories of home and the mother. Through their food practices, their bodies return alive (Allen-Collinson and Owton, 2015) reactivating multi sensorial experiences which evoke the home.



Fig. 9.6. The Chinese knife. Photo by Amelie.
'A knife that I bought for £1 from my Chinese friends in the UK who went for a visit to China.' (comment from fieldnotes)



Fig. 9.7 The rice cooker in my kitchen
Photo by Amelie.

A transitional space is a space of comfort and equilibrium between the mother and the self, the womb and the real world, and fantasy and reality. The infant transits to this space when it has to 'leave' the mother to explore the world. Amelie uses objects which she charges of meanings to either surrogate and yet relate to the mother. The rotisserie is a transitional space where Amelie migrates between the Chinese home and life in the UK through the materiality of her daily life. These creative *performances* (fantasy) signify space and create place-affection through the semiotics of things which are given diverse meanings. Enmeshing cooking practices, ingredients and tastes, reviewing cultural and familiar habits, transforming the genealogies of eating, and the reinvention of the rules of market, Amelie fulfills her needs of home and emplaces her own traditions. Amelie's embodied practices create 'place-affections' or topophilia (Tuan, 1974), places that evoke the comfort of home. The creolization of practices, through combining tables of foods at home (see the tablographies in Chapter 8), is the way she gains the power and the lead for growing as an independent self.

We come back to the same location as when we arrived, towards the sliding doors, which face the courtyard, circling again in space.

9.4 The courtyard

The courtyard is the last space that Amelie wishes to explore. In this section, I explain the embodied *performances* of shopping and taking decisions regarding what to cook, through ‘touchy-feely’ (Crang, 2003) and multisensorial approaches (Pink, 2012, 2009b). I look at how these practices are embedded with the experiential and sensorial knowledge coming from her mother. The practice of shopping, through touching, smelling, and looking for the food trigger Amelie’s cravings, feelings, and memories of the home since they are filled with the emotions of her mother’s care.

Tuan (1974) and Cultural pedagogy (Cole et al. 1978; Bortolotti, 2010), agree that skin is the first sense that an infant develops, and through which it makes its ingress into the world. Studies on haptic sensations during childbirth revealed that during birth the newborn’s skin is over stimulated by contact with the air, and it is only when it is held by the mother that the physical sensation of cold is transformed into warmth and security (Bortolotti, 2010). Psychoanalytical and cultural studies on child development argue that the body is the first mediator between the baby and the world before language (Kristeva, 1982). Allen-Collinson and Owton, (2015) argue that touch is a complex and significant sense which has been culturally undermined. Yet, touch regulates individuals’ social and affective experiences of the world. Kristeva (1982), in particular, argues that the bodily relationship with the maternal is, indeed, regulated through the incorporation and expulsion of food. Following these intuitions, I argue that the market is an embodied experience, which awakens, revives, and strengthens the senses ‘from the ground’, or from the most peripheral organ of our body, the skin. Particularly, Amelie’s approach to food is first ‘touchy-feely’ (Crang, 2003). She shops with her hands, either through touching, or using palpable and proprioceptive sensations.

While Western societies recognize vision and hearing as intelligent senses, touching, smelling, and tasting, are still seen as the primates’ organic instruments (Tuan, 1974;

Classen, 1977, 2012; Kristeva, 1982). Tuan (1974) argues that animals perceive the food as static, through its shape, colours, sizes, and textures, and patterned environment, and use it as a perceptual strategy to better find and reach for it. In contrast, humans perceive the movements of their food in the environment and can judge the differences 'with a finger nail' (Tuan, 1974: 8), which make them supersensing beings.

Food is a mobile good, not because it has always been transported everywhere, but by virtue of the sociality of performances which surround and give meaning to it. The market is a place where people wave together by trading and bargaining their dinner. Its hustling and bustling has human rhythms, very different from the ones of the city. Here individuals can take their time to think and make sense of the place where they live. The experience of shopping is indeed a 'chaotic' overlapping of sounds, smells, and people's cravings, touching and moving everywhere. It is a 'war' of the lowest price, fought through whistles and sellers' bargaining choirs who attract attention of customers, the sounds of the pennies falling on the floor or passing from hand to hand while people pay for their food.

Rose (2003) gives an important lesson about how everyday banal objects like family photos give a cue of the 'embodiment of togetherness' between the mother and her children. Seemingly, I argue that sensorial and emotional engagements while commonly used ingredients are purchased, create a link between the mother and the daughter, as seen through Amelie's memories of mother's care while preparing the food. Shopping is a ritual that individuals repeat every day, perhaps without sufficient consciousness of the emotional and sensorial investment which these choices entail. They are choices embedded in their sense of home, and memories of food and care.

Amelie performs and stages a series of domestic rituals that she has learnt from her mother, who taught her how to choose and eat healthy foods. However, Amelie cannot always prepare Chinese meals abroad. As most teens of her generation, her mother would always provide her brother and her the meals at home, in order to let them study.

A large part of migration literature focuses on the importance of cooking one's food to ease relocation (Tan, 2007; Counhiam, 2009; Longhurst et al., 2010; Marte, 2012). Amelie,

who did not master the cooking skills, could still feel at home in the UK through emplacing these homely routines of shopping, using and practicing the embodied and sensorial knowledge which she knows from her mother about healthy food and body. Whilst walking through the stalls, Amelie keeps a firm attitude in the way she knows the food, thus showing experiential, affective, and sensorial knowledge, which shapes spaces and geographies of home and health (Blunt and Varley, 2004; Davinson and Milligan, 2007). Amelie touches the food to understand if it is ready, looks at it, smells it, turns it upside down, and takes it or leaves it back on the stand.



Fig. 9.8 Fig. 9.9 Sensory selection. Since Amelie does not want to waste the food, she will make sure that bananas and apples do not exceed the number of seven, one a day. Photo taken by video.



Fig. 9.10 Amelie's checking if fruit is ripe. Amelie does not always know what she will buy before going shopping. She does not have a shopping list with her. She makes her decision at the moment, by touching and trying the food that she will find on that day, considering its quality and price (comments from fieldnotes). Photo taken by video.

Amelie gained this knowledge from her mother; how to shop for healthy ingredients, select and compare them, eat a balanced meal and take care of the costs, and prevent wastage. It is here that the bonds with her mother manifest itself, as Amelie re-stages the same care that her mother had for her, to make herself a home in the UK.



Fig. 9.11 Oranges. Amelie compares the price of fruit each week. Photo by author.

Amelie stops by in a stand to search for garlic, an ingredient that her mother uses to fry their food. In the UK, where she has learnt to prepare some simple dishes in her own way. She adds garlic to her tomato spaghetti, which goes to show that ordinary food habits are always exposed to a challenge in negotiation and differentiation with the mother's cooking:

'I want to fry especially with the onion, cook vegetables or rice [...] depends what you have, sometimes I will put what I want here [...] but for my mom she has to cook with garlic, she can't cook without garlic [...] the vegetables she needs to use the garlic first, use the oil to fry the garlic, and then put vegetables ehm sometimes I forget, I think it's all right for me, but for my mom I know she is a bit - oh I know I can't - [...] because she cooked that way for twenty years'.

[from video]

Amelie has adopted a new menu in the UK according to her availabilities and capabilities, however ingredients like garlic are part of her healthy repertoire. Above all, Amelie argues that *'I will fry [the garlic] for the smell'*, as garlic recreates the aroma of home

(Rodaway, 1994; Sutton, 2001), and the odor of her mother's body and skin (Kristeva, 1982).

Whilst passing through the stands, Amelie checks the food and explains to me how she makes a proper choice when buying vegetables. She seems to know the tricks of the market. She moves around like an expert.



Fig. 9.12 Cabbage leaves. 'Arriving earlier in the morning you will have best chances to find very big loafs. Sometimes, the leaves of the cabbage will be ruined outside.

However, if they are not too ruined, 80 pence is still a convenient price for a Chinese loaf as inside it will be good and a Chinese loaf lasts for at least one week.'

(comments from fieldnotes). Photo by author.



Fig. 9.13 Celery radishes. Amelie always looks if the radishes are black, which means that celery is not fresh (comment from fieldnotes). Photo taken from video.

Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos (2014), argue that Baianas mothers, who have passed to their daughters the know-how of cooking, in reality have transmitted an embodied and emotional knowledge that goes beyond these skills. This experiential 'knowledge' links these women to their mothers, through that sense of security and nurturing relationship in the course of their lives. Thus, for Amelie, this knowledge is far more richer than simply being able to shop and care for herself. By repeating these practices she relieves the sense of uneasiness and it helps her to feel secure in the UK.

With the same care and dedication of a mother, Amelie makes the UK a home. The habits of comparing, selecting, seeing and touching make her feel good about the choices that she is making, and transmit a sense of security because they recall her home and the nurturing mother. Shopping is made by gut, knowledge of food gained through our repeated experiences of food at home (Plaza, 2014), memories of mother's teaching (Abarca, 2004), and our sight, touch, smell, and emotions.

Home is the result of a sensorial experience, as well as the site of affection, care, security and health connected with the mother's home (Counihan 1999). Food is indeed a connective tissue between the mother and the daughter (Kristeva, 1982; Abarca, 2004), especially as she secures home abroad.

When finishing her shopping outside, Amelie returns to the stall from where we started our shopping tour to double check some vegetables. We walk back circling the courtyard on the opposite side this time.

9.5 Moving forward

In this story, I explored how Amelie constructs home in the UK through embodied, experiential and sensorial knowledge of domestic and healthy practices of food. Practices of food are interpreted as performances (Desmond, 2003), artistic rituals which convey meanings beyond what can be seen. Home through sensorial and embodied spatialised practices of food, is described as the emotional link that Amelie has to her mother. The three places that Amelie maps and craft at the market explore how the mother's relationship is manifesting through the ordinary practices of food to give meaning and stability during the daughter's relocation. The way individuals use and transform 'things'

in challenging ways, is how they create transitional and symbolic spaces where 'things' are presences of the absence. Home emerges as a place which lies in between the sense of security and the need of discovery (of the other) which is typical of the infant growing up (Kristeva, 1982; Winnicott, 1986). In this sense, home is always relational. Markets are places which migrants consider important for the connection with both the former and the adopted home (Stevenson, 2016) and for their participation in public life. Here, this relation of care (Tuan, 1974; Cresswell, 2004) that people feel for their places is overly emphasized by the embodied nature of emotions, which passes through affective and sensual memories of the food that individuals can eat and find in these locations. In an era where the consumer logic of eating is changing the way individuals relate to the city, as an isolated, disembodied and anesthetized experience, the spatiality of emotions and memories of food and embodied and sensorial knowledge of everyday life are important to recreate comfortable and relational experiences of dwelling. The metaphor of the mother's bonding, indeed, seeks hope to grow our cities like maternal wombs, that contain and secure everyone.

Chapter 10

Discussion

10.1 Introduction to chapter

This thesis aimed to explore the connection between place-making, migration and belonging of South-East Asian women living in the UK through adoption and transformation of daily food practices. To address this aim, the research was conducted in phases. In phase 1, an interview-based study was undertaken. Using a thematic analysis three themes emerged, namely affordability, creolization, home country, and exclusion. The thematic analysis, however, had some limitations presented in Chapter 6. Therefore, in phase 2, creative and sensorial methods were employed as well as working more collaboratively with the women. The analysis of ethnographies are reported in Chapters 8 and 9.

This current chapter summarises and discusses the findings of the thematic analysis and ethnography. The data has been analysed using an interpretive and reflexive approach. It, also, highlights the limitations of thematic analysis and its findings. I have integrated and triangulated data from the two methodologies, thereby providing an example of their combination. The thesis theorised the link between food, belonging and place in migration by centering the analysis on domestic food practices in public spaces. Besides a couple of conventional findings, that are similar to previous literature, the method in itself is an original contribution of the thesis. The following section, summarises the findings of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) with regard to sense of place for the migrant women of this research.

10.2 Limitations of findings in thematic analysis

One of the limitations was that women found it hard to talk about food as something special, especially when they could not demonstrate what they meant. As a consequence, creolization (i.e. that which was only talked about rather than seen in practice) revealed the pitfalls of the method in capturing the liveliness of the women's everyday lives.

In the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), the language used to talk about sense of place was more representational, which was different from the sensual and creative methods. In creative and sensorial methods, the register shifted among the material, the

evocative, the sensual and the creative (e.g. oyster oil appropriated as balsamic vinegar), thus revealing more complexity. In the interviews, the women could talk about what they were doing, but the 'how it was done' remained unknown. This showed that language alone could not cover the deepest meanings of existence (McLuhan, 1962; Parker, 1999), alongside the fact that English is a second language for the women. The women spoke about certain special ingredients, but it was slightly frustrating as I did not know much about them. It was participation in common events (e.g. the banquet, the market and extra participant observations), where visual and sensual ethnographies were employed, that resulted in more effective ways to learn about the women and their cultural specificities (Wenger, 2015; Jones, 2002; Lawthom, 2012). Moreover, with sensorial methods I was able to embody their culture, as I employed a range of sensorium rather than just listening to what they talked about (Pink, 2008; Longhurst et al., 2010).

Suggestions on economic household management are presented in the thematic analysis (e.g. shopping in big malls outside the city). However, with creative and embodied ethnographies, particularly through more participatory embodied methods, they emerged as more than simply suggestions (e.g. where and how to do 'the right' shopping). Proper creative practices of shopping weaved into original meanings of place, which are presented in 11.4.

Merely talking about food practices was quite restrictive for the women. It was much easier and relaxing for them to engage in demonstrations. Furthermore, only talking about the women's creativity through the creolization of foods concretely posed a limit. The product of this creativity resulted in the ethnographies, in more extensive and dynamic processes operated in different settings and ways, and were not limited to talking about creative dishes. However, women's verbal accounts sometimes resulted in very practical, material and sensorial, especially while discussing their domestic experiences. This also inspired the decision to use another methodology to explore the richness of the experience of everyday life. With sensorial and creative methods, these aspects were unpacked to understand how women made home in practice. What emerged with creative and sensorial methods was an extended exploration of what creolization meant and how it manifested in many original ways. With interviews, I could not access home spaces in the way it occurred within embodied methods. The encounters talked about home and public spaces, yet I could not see how these women blurred the

division between the two. The following section presents a summary of sense of place in ethnographic work.

10.3 Sense of place in ethnographic work

Food practices have highlighted a continuity of home abroad, and have resulted in the way women actively transformed their realities and life-worlds. Whilst I have dealt with food as an object of study by conducting interviews, it was clear from the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) that these findings were only a partial way to investigate food practices. The sensorial and embodied methods, which the women implicitly suggested through their actions, and the ways in which language could not disclose sensual aspects of ordinariness and uncover completely the meaning of these lives, redirected my attention to food as a method. The creative and sensorial methods, revealed more about the nature of creolization, which emerged as a theme in the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), to explain how women realized their dishes, varied their diets and changed their traditions. Not only did the ethnographies provide more practical examples of creolization, but they also extended to foodwork including setting up of tables, shopping, the recycling of 'things' and the way leftovers were redistributed.

Creolization resulted in a process rather than an outcome. This means that with creative and sensorial methods my attention was captured by the way women's reproductive work gave new life and changed the nominalism of things by giving alternative meanings to things (e.g. new functions to tools), and by the different (non)representational forms in which these things were embedded. For instance, the leftovers at the banquet were not wasted, they were distributed among the women who then took it home and shared it with their families 'let me bring the chocolate cake to my kids - my husband would like to try this'. The creolization of their appetites through tasting food from other's kitchens and cultures extended in the way the women creolized spaces like the home creating connections between the public and the private, reverting the familiar and unfamiliar, and generating chains of solidarity and support between migrant communities. Furthermore, the method allowed to look into the women's uneasiness during migration through a more positive lens. More than in the interviews, the women were empowered

through engaging in home-making practices through the ethnographic encounters and sense of place emerged through actions.

The following section weaves together the meanings of home generated by the women of this research in the ethnographies of the banquet and the market. Some overlapping ideas of home within the two methods are, also, presented.

10.4 Putting things together

This section discusses in detail the ideas of home that emerged through the ethnographic work: home as embodied and sensual; home as simultaneous, home as a rebellious and creative space; post-consumer and ecological home; home as relational and multi-vocal; and home as matrilineal. It, also, integrates findings from the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to show how the experiences reflected in the two methods can complement each other. Specifically, it points to some overlapping ideas of home that emerged from the two phases of the research.

The analysis of home through sensual and creative methods and thematic analysis has confirmed some of the meanings from the literature of place, such as home as a feeling of safety (Down and Blunting, 2006), maternity guidance (Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos, 2014), hospitality and conviviality (Gunaratam, 2018), domestication of public spaces (Koch and Latham, 2013) and relationality (Malpas, 2012). Further, home emerged as a trans-local (McCraig, 1996; Braidotti, 2011) mobile (Massey, 1994; Thrift, 2008), multiple (Massey 1994; Amhed, 1999; Georgiou, 2006) and a trans-migrational space (Cresswell, 2004; Ang, 2015) and rhizomatic (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). In this research, the home was especially sought as an embodied and sensual experience. Furthermore, women's food practices in everyday urban life generated unexpected meanings of home. In the following section some of these meanings discussed above will be explored with reference to the literature.

a) Home as embodied and sensual

Home emerged as an embodied and sensual experience in the ethnographic work and the thematic analysis. Home was embedded in women's bodily performances and was given

meaning by women's sensations, feelings and memories when talking about and making food. Particularly, the women evoked the home not only on the geographical ties to their original country, but also through their embodied feelings of security and comfort (Longhurts et al., 2010). Sensations of health and safety arose through women's thermoceptive feelings (such as warmth) (Vannini and Taggard, 2013) and were evoked through the metaphors of the womb (see the market) and the banquet as a gastro-event. Home extends into public locations and places like the markets. These commensal spaces were revealed being crucial for migrants abroad. These are not only cultural benchmarks, but also spaces where health and comfort are constructed every day.

These embodied and sensual meanings of home were also related to the mother's food. In this respect, home emerged as matrilineal (Magalhães and Amparo Da Silva Santos, 2014) and genealogical (Hay, 1998). Sense of place was transmitted through the women sharing their experiential knowledge and their cuisines as a way of nurturing and comforting each other.

The literature of the senses in Chapter 4 discussed the dominance of sighting and the sensorial specializations in the Western society. This research has shown the use of the sensorial beyond these sensual specializations in every day life. Thermoception, touch, proprioception, movement, smells, tastes and synaesthesia have emerged as dominant factors rather than merely being potential factors underpinning a sensual analysis of place. Place is something that societies construct on different sensorial scales and home is multi-sensorial (Pink, 2004). Through these diverse experiences individuals achieve a complex understanding of the world. For instance, Heil (2015) discussed the embodied and sensual practices of conviviality for the Senegalese in Catalonia, Spain through weaving, smiling, greeting and other types of body languages. The transferability of these embodied semiotics and knowledge from one culture to another that the Senegalese used to create a convivial home for themselves in the resettling country is extremely interesting. Similarly the women in this research adjusted their cultural embodied sensitivity, such as the perception of cold and hot, to the new environment through food to create these welcoming meanings that eased their relocation. Moreover, the dishes that the women cook also include the appropriation of other cultures in their costumes in order to deliver meanings of hospitality for themselves and the others. For example,

Helen's Christmas cake at the banquet is functional to opening a dialogue with me as a non-Chinese person amongst Chinese women. Mary's suggestion to replace Chinese oyster oils with balsamic vinegar demonstrates her learning to make her recipe adaptable to her current home. Through food, the women found a way of talking about and displaying their culture and made it more familiar to the host society, such as the the idea of introducing seasonal and various nutriments to the women at the banquet which is based on the principles of a cold-hot-warm-cool nature of food and their nutrient content to balance the indivisual's ying and yang.

b) Simultaneity of home

The findings of this thesis show how home resulted in an extroverted sense of belonging complemented by different and simultaneous attachments (Massey, 1994). First, the simultaneity of home was illustrated through the multiple attachments that the women established with the overseas communities. Second, they maintained transnational connections that encompassed the economic interests as well.

First, interestingly, in relation to the ideas expressed by the diasporists, who discussed the ethno-political roots of home, the women of this research belong to different migration flows and have diverse histories of migration. This includes the flow of middle-class Hong Kong women who came to the UK for education and to experience democracy or the movement of the middle-class Chinese women who moved from the mainland to the UK in search of better education and employmet opportunities in order to stay ahead in the competitive in China. Although they are part of different ethnic communities, the women's ethno-political roots do not motivate them to maintain attachment to their original country. Instead, they motivate these diverse women to come and bind together through sharing the socio-political context of their diasporic journeys. The women, who shared their stories through their food expressed their feelings about how this diversity has filled original and unique forms of existence for them abroad (Nyman, 2017). Belonging here is shaped through the material and the sensorial forms of these encounters. Inclusion and exclusion to different communities was continually reworked by the women. The women participate in diverse communities, create their own communities, and move in and out them. Indeed, the women did not perceive themselves

as being part of a unique ethnic community, especially since their national community is quite mobile as people move away once they accomplish their targets or because they can not legally remain, but when they perform their food practices their belonging is extended to diverse communities and groups.

The diasporic belonging that the women perform include their sentimentalism for the original country, whilst merging with the fascinating aspects of alterity that the women display through their food practices and solicit through their taste buds.

The sentimentalism towards the home is not solely expressed through a geo-political affection to the original country. The positions that the women take are also political in different ways. It is evident through the feminism that they embrace, their activism in reclaiming justice for their past as colonised countries and their (hi)stories of famine. The women elaborate new creative forms of belonging. Thus, through the ethnographic work of this research, the women have shown how they maintain connections across countries through their food practices, by eating and/or cooking their traditional food on national holidays, and partaking in the local traditions. Space is still represented historically and politically through the narratives that the women share, but these accounts are embedded with the sensual memories of food shared with other foreigners. This allows them to define their belonging in very liberal and original ways. These connections are functional to sustain their sense of belonging through the history of their original countries, the current political events, and their families who are still there.

Second, through the ethnographic work the transnational connections to the original country also emerges in different forms, rather than solely economic. These connections are sensual, affective, imaginative and symbolic and give the opportunities to the women to experience a simultaneity of belonging.

Diasporas scholars define these communities on the basis of general features. They are described as having a communal history, economic interests, and maintaining their relationships with the original home through their work. Diasporas set spatial and political configurations for the communities abroad, and in the literature they appear as static phenomena such as the business of 'takeaway' (Chen Y.J., 2013) for the Chinese and 'the nail saloon' for the Vietnamese in the UK. The transnational link with the original country

is maintained through these economic businesses that reproduce their culture abroad through the means of their work.

This research sheds light on the fact that in these forms of businesses there is a domestic routine that involves women engaged in activities, that has not been explored by diasporists, who have only suggested the idea of a business home. Therefore, beyond the ideas of restaurants and takeaway of the immigrant communities, there is a third space through which migrants connect to their original countries. The ethnographies showed that public spaces like a common room in a university and a local market could be examples of how the women construct sensorial and affective ties to their original countries, beside the economic and political, attachments with multiple homes (ie. the original and the host country). The women stretch and extend their geo-political position outside their diasporic group and their commercial activities. More than the economic connection it is important to highlight the material, symbolic and affective dimensions of belonging. The fervent activity around food is the way they navigate different spaces across borders.

The dilemma between transnational or diasporic 'definitions' of home in this research was explored and illustrated by the women who described and showed the home they had constructed abroad. Instead of being a mere spectator judging from the outside or through the lens of the existing literature on migration, this thesis approached migration by looking into women's spaces of everyday life. It would seem to be a generalization to view their sense of place and belonging only in terms of diasporic or trans-national forms of resettlement. For instance, the women preserved strong relationships and sentiments for the 'homeland' as home. They maintained linkages with their communities in the original country, cooked and shopped for imported food from their own country, regularly visited their families in the original country, maintained contacts through Skype, and tended to form communities with others with the same nationality. However, they also formed new and diversified communities in the host country. For instance, they congregated with foreign people, and cooked and consumed their cuisines. For some, the 'homeland' is a place that they hope to return to and reunite with their families, but for others the homeland is a place that they visit once a year, and where due to the death of their relatives, the family sizes have begun to reduce.

c) Home as a rebellious and creative space

The women employ agency through their food practices against the limitations that they encountered during their relocation. The thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) brought to the fore some of these limitations such as cost of the Chinese food being too high; the westernisation of Chinese food; the lack of holidays during Chinese New Year; lack of places to celebrate their original culture; language barriers; the stereotypes about the Chinese food; and the poor knowledge of the Chinese culture. In the banquet, some discontent emerged among the Chinese women about not having anyone local who took part in their celebrations. This could be due to there being limited opportunities -and spaces- where individuals could encounter their 'original' culture. Food practices, instead, recreate 'authentic' spaces of home whilst overcoming those barriers with creative and sensual solutions.

Creolization emerged as the main feature of home with both methods. In the interviews, it was talked about through the combination of ingredients, the re-making of traditions and the diversification of diets. However, sensorial and embodied methods disclosed novel patterns of creolization. Creolization extended as a practice taking place in different spaces and forms. Home was recreated through the sensorial aspects of food in different areas of the city through assemblage and disassemblages of "things" (material objects) and foodstuffs (e.g. cooking prawn crackers in a pan instead of a wok), creative shopping, and recycling practices.

In the banquet, I have argued that home is assembled and disassembled through the materiality embodied in women's everyday lives and the meanings raised from the narrations of these movable lives. In this respect, home results as a 'mobile' space (Massey, 1994; Braidotti, 2011), not only because it 'follows people wherever they go' or individuals find a geographical home elsewhere when they leave the original country, but also because these geographies move in the way the individuals shape them through their trajectories and action. In this respect, the women stretch out the geographic borders by creating material and sensorial connections among diverse locations that they consider as home.

Anzaldúa (1987) argues that there are geographic spaces, such as borders, where creolized forms like languages express the collective and personal meanings of place of diverse groups. These are very often repressed and considered unacceptable if they enter in conflict with the dominant customs. The borders that she describes are real locations, territories that have been geo-politically contested between different governances or have been excluded as part of ethnic conflicts. However, the borders are imaginary spaces, they function in a way that individuals who live at the margins can continue to exist. In this thesis, the women's culinary practices are judged and questioned when they are performed in public (White) spaces. However, the women appear resilient as they bring their domestic cuisines to public spaces to voice their existence. In these spaces, such as the common room, the women unpack the history of colonialism to generate multicultural experiences, and spaces of resistance and liberation (i.e. the banquet) from the colonial domination, and where they can rework these colonial forms and boundaries through cross-cultural encounters (Marte, 2011).

The women emplace a geography of home, which does not represent place and space as fixed positions and a stasis of being (Massey, 1994). Their sense of place is constructed in opposition to the conditional sense of belonging in the politics of space. These politics include the precarious and dependent permanence, inflexible and regulated movements in the country of resettlement (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Braidotti, 2011) and at times even in the former country⁴⁹. The sense of place and space that the women have developed is not dependent on the meaning that these policies convey.

d) *Home as a rhizoma*

Home appears not a fixed point, but rather rhizomatic or diluted and distributed in space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Braidotti 2011, 2014) through the systems of sustainability and solidarity that the women perform in the host country. These include practices such as sharing their food and recipes with other women and cooking during celebrations, learning how to cook foreign foods, recycling and re-inventing traditions. However, as food enters in other's homes through these cycles of sustainability and the ecological

⁴⁹ I refer to certain migration policies that do not allow migrants to return to their original country once they have left.

practices of women, home results an experience that is mobile and relational, whereas food plays the crucial role of social connector.

Another idea that emerged in the analysis is that of home as being a space of 'authenticity'. As women come abroad, they find themselves in unfamiliar environments. The thematic analysis has shown that the high cost of imports and the necessity to balance their financial resources is among the many disruptions that women encounter when resettling in the host country. These restrictions impact upon how they built a sense of home in the host country. However, in order to manage their living, women showed inventiveness and resilience in doing 'things' in alternative ways, which results in cultures that differ from the local and the former.

The women embrace post-consumer cultures (Möhring, 2008) through creole and hybrid practices, which help them feel in place. This was described as 'creolization', for example the creation of new dishes with the ingredients available, but also through the assemblage and disassemblage of things at home, recycling of food and materials, sharing food with other women, using traditional utensils and devices in ingenious ways. The post-consumer culture eludes consumerism, because the women are able to manage their finances and save on the cost of food. Moreover, it is about reversing the geographies of the marketplace, that result in making home a commodified and mass capitalised space through the homogenization of the experiences of consumption and tastes (Cook and Crang, 1996; Bell and Valentine, 1997; Henshaw, 2013), where cultures and costumes tend to lose their multi-sensorial nature (Cook and Crang, 1996; Bell and Valentine, 1997).

Commodification is indeed a market strategy as a result of globalisation, where artifacts are homogenised by ignoring their cultural relevance. Abarca (2004) describes this effect when talking about the charlas. Charlas (chatting) is the socio-cultural context from which Mexican foods originates. This food is prepared by Mexican women while working and chatting in their home. When food is catered to non-Mexican people in the global fast foods joints, it not only changes in flavour but also loses its social and affective embodied nature (Abarca, 2004). This results in the loss of social, sensorial, and affective characterizations of its use (Bell and Valentine, 1997). Instead, the women create spaces where they can express placefulness and belonging through their food practices, these

spaces are hybrid and playful (urban) settings where home is a unique and personal experience.

Women's ecological practices are also linked to the desire of revitalizing the living urban spaces. Through ordinary food practices things are crafted and remade to fit the desired dimension of life abroad and their essential sense of belonging. In this respect, the tablographies are a space where the women felt free to talk and display their mundane and hybrid aspects of their life without feeling judged.

The women create a counter-space, a space of authenticity, personal growth and transformation related to the experience of migration. This research has shown that women utilise ecological practices in order to rework the meaning of their story. These ecological systems are a survival strategy in relation to the financial burdens of migration, and they serve the purpose of re-enacting home abroad by following the ethos and custom of their original families. The women's proactive skills, such as budgeting, shopping, and creolizing and re-inventing traditions, are the way they transform the old narratives of home (i.e. starvation, famine, poverty) and revert the downplaying position that they have taken in relation to these narratives to show the resilience of their communities. Within the idea of sustainability system, I think of the home as a diluted experience of belonging connected with the mobility of the women. This emphasises the metaphor of the circling idea of lifetime that naturalises space and place as vital processes, subjected to degeneration and regeneration through bodies in action and transformation. This also coincides with the current philosophy of materialism (..) that argues that the material (and the physical) does not entail a stasis of 'being' (Amhed, 1999). Things are transformed and regenerated into something new. Home becomes a point of departure for the women, a psychological and emotional growth as human beings. This was well evoked in the banquet (Chapter 8), where a mobile kitchen that was assembled and disassembled in a few hours generated meanings of life and change for the women.

d) Home as relational and multivocal

According to Amhed (1999) feeling at home does not necessarily include the need to belong to a community that shares the same ethnic background. Instead, she points out that place is weaved together by people who share some purpose without being a

community. Similarly, Sökefeld (2002) studied the phenomena of the diasporic propaganda that creates a sentiment of belonging. However, he argued that individuals do not always agree with it and may not share a diasporic consciousness. Instead, he noticed that social events like fundraising are a way for people to weave a sense of place in the form of cohesiveness. Cohesiveness is not formed on the basis of sharing the same cultural heritage or a diasporic sentiment of any sort. Rather, it is the social practices that allows a collective consciousness to emerge and create belonging. This collective consciousness does not necessarily correspond to being a diasporic community.

The women of the banquet shared with each other different experiences and feelings of home that were far from sharing a communal diasporic sentiment. Instead, these experiences were memories of the native home and family, attachment to the old ways of life, dual attachments to Manchester and Hong Kong, Manchester as a tasting place, and Manchester as a place of work and alienation. These sentiments that emerged in the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) reflect their cultural and ethnic diversity, despite the fact that they all migrated to the UK and originally belong to the South-East Asian diasporas. For instance, these sentiments were expressed as remarking the difference between being from Hong Kong and a Chinese from the mainland, or being from former colonies, such as both the case of Hong Kong and Vietnam, through provincialisms, and having different cuisines back in the home country.

However, when the women met they shaped the idea of home as a relational product, beyond the cultural, diasporic or transnational (Hall, 1997). Everyone was included as a part of the other's experience of home through networks of empathy, care, maternity, reciprocity, and solidarity (Christie 2006). Finding a common ground through sharing food generated experiences of place as collective and shared (Fisher et al, 2017). The women did not feel the need to see each other anymore after this encounter, therefore they did not become a community. However, the fact that they met and shared their experiences demonstrated that food has brought these women together 'in the same place', a place that was such not only in spatial terms but also as a collective consciousness. The following Chapter 11 presents the conclusion of the thesis.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

In conclusion, the thesis has addressed the main aim to explore the connection between place-making, migration and belonging of South-East Asian women living in the UK through retaining, adoption and transformation of daily food practices. The aim has been addressed in two phases. In the first phase, I have used interviews and thematic analysis to talk about experiences of food, place and migration with the women. However, since the method had shortcomings, I employed creative and sensual methods to illustrate the concreteness and sensual essence of the women's lives. The latter, particularly, explored lively experiences of home. In addition, I have developed a novel method that has reached out to the women in their domestic places. With regard to the aim, a rich, interpretative and reflexive analysis of home as place-making has been organised by triangulating data and overlapping ideas from thematic analysis and sensual ethnography. The findings have revealed home as embodied and sensual, simultaneous, 'rebellious', relational and multi-vocal, ecological and matrilineal, confirming in part the literature whilst making a novel contribution to the literature of place-making and the home.

11.1 Implications for knowledge

The resulting knowledge of this study makes two main contributions, one is theoretical in the field of place studies, and the other is methodological, possibly informing or serving as social intervention.

First, the thesis has generated new theoretical knowledge that contributes to the discussion of gender migration and place-making. Furthermore, by triangulating theories from the four bodies of knowledge, migration, place studies, foodways and sensory studies, the research has also contributed to the literature of place, where new research questions are leading towards an interdisciplinary approach (Cross, 2001). In particular, the thesis has used an interdisciplinary lens through diverse fields such as human geography, psychology, cultural anthropology and food studies, the anthropology of foodways, senses and media studies, material culture and sub-disciplines such as eco-feminism, home studies, critical developmental psychology and critical psychoanalysis.

Transcending the boundaries of single disciplines, this thesis has allowed for a more insightful and critical standpoint to explore and understand as well as to interrogate consolidated knowledge in the literature of migration. The interdisciplinary approach has provided a framework for developing a novel methodology.

Second, this research has collected and given voice to the South-East Asian women in Manchester and Leeds, particularly in relation to expressing their concerns, needs and experiences about their lives in the UK. In this respect, it has generated new understandings of the experiences of first generation South-East Asian women in the UK through aspects of gender migration and domestic practices that have been under played in the literature (Curtin, 1994). The findings have informed how South-East Asian women integrate their experiences of migration with food practices to make home abroad. The resulting knowledge has highlighted and generated new perspectives in the way food is used as a special and collective experience for women, and how belonging is interpreted, expressed, and enacted through food in domestic and public domains. Therefore, the thesis fills a gap in the literature in relation to the lack of knowledge and fair representation with respect to these groups. I have written the thesis to encourage a diversity of perspectives and embodied forms of representations that the women utilize when communicating about their daily lives. The thesis has recapitalised the discourse of women and food in the literature and in practice, suggesting future directions for the construction of political agendas that would consider migrant women's positions when planning the construction of democratic cities. As highlighted by Pink (2004) and Longhurst et al. (2010) another gap of the literature of migration there is a lack of interest in the domestic domain and the consequent exclusion of women from the focus of literature and politics.

Third, the findings of thematic analysis can be relevant for practitioners working within health and community well-being. Practitioners could benefit from this thesis, as it reports findings with regard to the South-East Asian women's well-being in the UK. The findings could help them plan the necessary steps to take in relation to these communities. Since it is hard to engage with this group of women, especially in areas of health, where barriers still exist due to rights of access, or for cultural and religious

reasons, and reliance on self-medication; using food methods could be an easy way to reach out to them. In addition, it could inspire practitioners to use food related events and social kitchens to promote social engagement.

Fourth, the thesis has added to the field of qualitative research methods with a major contribution by the creation of a novel sensory and embodied method (Pink, 2004, 2009a), the tablographies (Chapter 8). This method, also, informs human geography as it opposes the convention of the use of traditional maps for the construction of place and space (Harley, 1989; Farinelli, 2009). It is a new and progressive work in phenomenological mapping that could be used by practitioners working in areas of migration, health and well-being, urban regeneration and social and community services, to promote policy changes for disadvantaged groups and minorities. For instance, tablographies could also be used in working with diverse, marginalized and excluded populations (i.e. economically disadvantaged, the elderly, the poorly educated and disempowered people) as food reduces isolation and fosters connectivity. The politics of space should be concerned with how migration adapts to the new societies, thereby promoting places of culture to ease relocation. Furthermore, researchers interested in creative methods could use the tablographies to start new applications of the method for the exploration of different realities. In addition, the thesis has made a contribution in 'humanising' the method, in order to get close to the participants' experiences, and it leads in the direction of a more ethical and participatory practice in qualitative research. This method has revealed the good practice of accessing small domestic places and opening the possibility to explore the home. These disclose inner realities that are usually under-represented. Sensual, embodied and creative approaches present useful ways to explore migrant flows and gender migration. They are also contributing to the emergent field of home studies (Down and Blunting, 2006).

Fifth, the method has enabled access to domestic places, thus contributing to the area of home studies. I have utilized traditional methods in the first part of this study and this was supplemented by sensorial methods, especially when it became clear that the women were aiming for spaces of autonomy and were co-directing this research. In the banquet (Chapter 8), I have illustrated tablographies, a method which maintains an

ethical approach to the investigation of private places, family and women's spaces, by cooking, preparing, feasting, eating, and shopping with the women. Tablographies have been inspired and crafted by three key aspects of the literature. One is the contemporary ethnographic work (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), which invites the researcher to merge with the everyday life of the participants and become a participant herself. Two is Pink's (2009a, 2012) embodied and sensorial ethnographies, which use the media as extensions of human sensorium, to expand the understanding of complex systems of human life and create new sensorial experiences and engagements with reality. Three is the human geographic knowledge of place for the deconstruction of maps and the geometry of urban space. I have extended this literature to propose non-intrusive and serendipitous forms of engagement with daily life. I considered the participation of the researcher in the life of individuals as temporary and discontinuous, in order not to alter the women's behaviour and invade their privacy. Furthermore, observations were conducted for a limited time and in different settings, rather than accessing the life of people in a single setting or for extended periods of time. I believe that this approach presents a broad picture about how the women behave in different settings, as they, themselves, are those who chose these settings. This research was conducted following the principle of the 'ecological management', due to the limited resources of the researcher. For this purpose, I have developed the 'neighbourhood' as an ethnographic space for the observation of everyday life (Fisher, J. 2017). I have, also, taken inspiration from 'friendship as a method' (Owton and Allen-Collinson, 2014), as most of the acquaintances from the first phase of the research became closer during the second phase.

I also pursue a non-intrusive observation through the realization with the women of spaces of action (i.e. other than mere 'observation'). Similarly to Pink (2012), I developed the method serendipitously and purposively by switching from manual practices to one that accommodated the women, following the ethics and the limitations of conducting research in public places and due to limited financial resources. Therefore, I 'assembled and disassembled' these methods with the women. I envision the possibility to using this methodology to engage participants in future research and empower them in the process.

Lastly, with regards to the problem of textualization in anthropological research (Chapter 4), which argues that text is still dominant when anthropologists who work with sensual methods are presenting their findings, the thesis suggests a 'solution'. I have proposed a method-graphia or an artographic method (McMahon, J., 2017), which combines textual data (graphic) with creative data sources such as sensorial, photographic, the symbolism in sensual maps (i.e. in chapter 9, the market is figured as a womb), and food practices as artistic performances. Also, in this study, the multi-method approach that I employed suggests that the focus is not on the outcome from the data gathered. Rather, I look reflexively through the process of gathering data. I am aware that the findings in this research are provisional and transient, rather than a representation of their culture. Therefore, I argue that textualism to interpret, discuss and disseminate the research findings could be encompassed through a method that focuses on the process other than the outcome. The following section presents the reflexive researcher.

11.2 Personal and methodological reflexivity throughout the research

This section discusses the personal and methodological reflexivity in relation to the Ph.D journey. Crang argues that autobiography sometimes '*comes to be the research*' (2003: 498), meaning that the life and interests of the researcher could not be separated from its 'outcome'. Borrowing from Crang (2003) the idea of 'autobiographical trajectory' in relation to academic research, I recognise how this research is intermingled in my journey (from Italy to the UK in 2012, from the UK to China in 2015, and back to Italy in 2016) and how migrating to other countries influenced the way the topic developed. In this respect, it was when I arrived in the UK that I started to reflect on the meaning of belonging and noticed that food was a crucial part of it. There was also the similarity of experiences that I shared with the other women that I encountered. This is how food became a topic of interest and investigation in relation to place-making. In this section, I reflect on three main points:

- 1) my position in and out of the Asian communities whilst conducting research;
- 2) how the research became a co-propriety of the women and myself due to the constant reflexive work to balance the researcher-researched unbalanced positions;

- 3) the idea of visceral positionality or embodiment in ethnic relationships and how this research has developed through my experience of migration in China.

First, the literature argues that in the research process there may be conflictual interests due to the ownership of the information (Parker, 2004) and how and why participants decide to share and disclose information related to their lives with a perfect stranger (the researcher), especially if (s)he is an outsider in relation to the community. Conflictual interests depend upon the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the researched in relation to gender, ethnic (racial), and class positions that the participants and the researcher define throughout the research process. In my case I am a Caucasian woman wanting to access Asian women's communities. These positions became particularly critical and always needed always to be acknowledged.

I introduced myself to the women as a migrant woman in the UK, as I shared with most of them a similar journey. Like them, I came to England to study and start a career. However, this generated both responses of inclusion and exclusion in the various communities that I accessed. In some cases, the women were emphatic (eg. keep contact through email, willing to meet again, interested about my story). The fact that we shared the same story enhanced collaboration between us. Also, my position as a Ph.D. student facilitated the relation with women belonging to a different ethnic community, who agreed to participate in the research. The women felt very sympathetic and accepted participation since they or their children had also been students (e.g. *'I also studied for a Ph.D.'*; *'I was also a student here'*). In this respect, my ethnic identity, as a white person doing research on South-East Asian women, was not an issue. Furthermore, the fact that as a student I naively delved straight into fieldwork knowing little about South-East Asian women turned out to be useful in the beginning. The women felt empowered as they were providing me with the knowledge (Fine, 1992, 1996). Also, speaking a foreign language enhanced a shared identification as outsiders in British society.

However, the interviews did not bring me as close as I wanted to their experiences. They even reinforced my position as an outsider of their communities in certain cases. Whilst talking with a Chinese mother about her experience of job seeking in the UK, out of the

context of the research, she disclosed me some truth: 'You are white, we (Chinese) are black', as she intended to point out the privileged side of the White migration to the UK that inevitably rendered our positions different in relation to our journey. Indeed, the women brought to the research relationship some of their frustrations regarding racial divisions that they had experienced in the host society (see Chapter 7 thematic analysis), and acknowledged some stereotypes that they had learned about Italian culture, that inevitably made it difficult for me to carry out the interview without feeling estranged. Therefore, I constantly reflected on the limits of my position in the research as a white migrant in the UK, to find how through constructive positionalities I could remain engaged in their community. I name these positionalities as creative and embracing feminism.

Positionality is usually interlaced with race, sex, culture, and nationality. However, beside a positionality based on the sociological and cultural status acquired by birth (Frémont, 1976) and the power positionalities at play in the research practice (Burman, 1994; Maynard, 1994; Oakley, 2003), I defend the idea of creative positionalities in research. I argue that the creative positionality in research is a series of projections by the participants and the researcher in relation to how they reflect on the research practice, the researcher, and his/her story. This helps the researcher to understand more about himself/herself in the context of the research and to connect with the participants, by solving possible conflicts which may arise in the research encounters.

Related to the first point, the second is about the participants and the researcher who are always implicated in a relationship of power (Burman, 1994). The researcher who collects and uses their information is inevitably in a position of power due to the fact that (s)he can manipulate the information. However, Crang (2003) argues that there are more interesting positions that determine the status of the researcher in relation to the participants in the research process. I argue that the women in this research performed creative positionalities (i.e. either socio-political and cultural positions) that brought the research relationships to other levels. In particular, beyond the research relationship, the women and I embraced human relationship through our feminism (ie. being women, mothers, daughters, ex-students, migrants, young, inexperienced).

Reflecting on these positions is important, as it shows how the women were not passive subjects and/or recipients in the research. Rather, their activism consisted in these creative positions that implicitly confirmed that the women were interested in getting listened to and visible to the researcher through their voices. These positions, indeed, led the performative and transformative character of this research from a methodological standpoint, whilst being trusted and accepted by their community. This enhanced collaboration, empathy and sharing between the participants and the researcher as they became clear about what benefits they wanted to get from the research.

During the research encounters, these unexpected positions were played out by the women. What one woman told me '*You are the same age as my daughter, I want to help you*', suggested on the one hand a benevolent attitude of the participant towards the researcher, but also how the participant was in control of the research, through seeing the researcher a "daughter" in need of help from a benevolent "mother". On another occasion, a participant let the researcher know how her social status was a disadvantage for a complete understanding of the topic of food and gender migration: '*You are not married yet and you haven't got children, so you don't have a lot of experience on cooking*'. On the other hand, the participant was there to explain this to me. Finally, another example highlights how my position as a researcher who tried to reward the participants for their time by offering drinks contrasted with the culture of social hierarchies of a Chinese woman who was a teacher at a university: '*You are the student, I am the professor, I'll pay the drink for you...I'll help you*'. This positioned me into a master-pupil relationship within the research, clearly affirming that I was there to learn from her.

The third point discusses another position in research. Skelton (2001) argues for a 'corporeal race identity'. A 'corporeal race' is a visceral positionality in the research relationship with the researched. These are feelings of acceptance, tolerance or repulsion of foods and practices which impacts on the researcher's and participant's embodied connections throughout this research. For instance, these may appear as implicit signals through non verbal communication (e.g. behaviors, skills, costumes) which mark out the researcher, although (s)he shows respects for the group customs. On the other end, the

researcher also communicates through the bodily sensations (e.g. smells, gestures, moving) the way (s)he perceives the participants and their space. I agree with Longhurst et al. (2010) that racial positions are enacted in the research relationship through the idea of the participant's and the researcher's visceral feelings during the research encounter. I occasionally experienced either familiarity or alienation in the fieldwork.

I started to understand about sensorial and embodied boundaries between the research participants and myself through the emplaced interview encounters. I left notes and photos of my fieldwork that showed that I was acknowledging this experience although I was not able to talk about it. Some of these were held in locations (e.g. Chinatown, Chinese bakery etc.) where most people were Chinese and where I felt displaced, or even when I was exposed to habits and foods that were unknown and unfamiliar to me. These issues raised unsettling feelings in the beginning. I felt estranged when looking at the cakes displayed in the glass window of the Chinese bakery, the menus at restaurants as I could not understand what the foods were, or when I smelled foods that the women were eating during the interview. These feelings created the boundaries between me as the observer and the women as the ones who were observed. However, as soon as I became familiar with the smells and the noises of their places, the flavours of their foods, their accents, these feelings of estrangement faded away. I expanded and educated my senses and body to new cultures.

While these visceral and bodily sensations were limited, the participants felt unsure about how I was using their knowledge, and they probably felt they needed to protect their cultural and domestic spaces from my interference. For example, at a Chinese dinner preparation to which I was invited, I was kindly left out of the kitchen as I was considered a 'guest'. Implicitly, being an observer at that time marked me out as an outsider of a well-set group of Chinese women who knew how to prepare the Chinese food. The corporeal race was central in the negotiation of the research powers through the cultural differences between me and the women. I could not access the kitchen on that occasion as 'I was not Chinese' or I did not know how viscerally the women were connecting between them through the food preparation. Cooking, shopping, eating, and celebrating, instead of answering questions such as in the interviews, are contexts where the women did not feel alienated by the practice of research, but probably felt more empowered and

could better negotiate the embodied feelings of familiarity and alienation that they experienced during the interviews.

The second part of the research, involved me sharing spaces and bodily practices, such as eating together and sharing food with the women. As I had already been exposed to commercial Chinese food, this part sounded more exciting, as it was about tasting home cuisine. In this respect, trying the other's food involved trust on both sides. Gaining credibility in the research by eating homemade food was an opportunity to transform things (Dallimore, 2010). Eating together 'educated' my body to learn about diversity in different ways, through new food smells and flavours, and in this way I was able to overcome the limits of my ignorance about their culture. It, also, helped to reciprocate the powers in the research (Nagy Hesse-Biber, 2000; Finch, 1984). The women also tried my food, which helped in terms of getting to know me in a more ordinary way than as the researcher. Indeed, in the last interviews, my position had changed. I became a trusted 'member of community', due to the fact that as I naturally included some of the women's customs in my daily routine (e.g. ordering a coconut soya milk for myself, eating rice) it was much easier to connect. My fiancé was also Chinese, which also helped to a certain extent. Certain places like Chinatown became familiar to me since I started to shop in mini markets, and I felt comfortable talking about these communal experiences with them.

After the collection of the data in 2015, I left the UK to marry my Chinese partner in China. I was confident that my relocation to China was going to work well because I had been exposed to Chinese culture and food in the UK for a long time. In Manchester I became familiar with eating Chinese food regularly and I had strengthened the relationships with foreign communities through food. However, my experience of relocating to China was characterised by unsettling feelings which I experienced in relation to the food. It was mediated through my body and my senses even more since I could not understand Chinese. It was in this context that I became aware of different sensorial experiences which were part of the local culture.

In the village where I lived with my husband's family I could not find my traditional food. The cost of food made it inaccessible on a regular basis. Furthermore, I could not cook my food as the family was in charge of preparing the meals. The cooker and the fridge were inaccessible 'spaces' in the family home. When I later moved into a flat with my partner, the cooker and other devices were very poor and I did not have an oven. The Chinese community was completely different from the one I had known in the UK, and so was the Chinese food. Eating and cooking my food in China became a battle to defend my roots. At that point, as a migrant in a foreign country, I understood my participants' hardships abroad.

The experience of motherhood also played a role in my research. I looked retrospectively through the data, and I understood more about the hardships of migration outside the participant's own culture. The journey to China added complexity to the data as I shifted from the role of a student, who had the freedom to explore the fieldwork, to feeling a huge responsibility towards the women. Looking retrospectively at the data I felt a maternal responsibility towards them, and protected the representations of these women in the thesis. I became concerned about creating a real picture of what really is, for me and the women, being migrants in Manchester (Porter, 1999) through creative and sensual methods. The encounters with different cultures and the cultural clashes that I experienced whilst moving countries, not only strengthened a sympathy with the South-East Asian women in the UK, but at the very end placed myself as one of them. The following section is about the steps that may follow this research.

11.2 Future footsteps in research

The collection of photos that I have presented in this research about the embodied nature of my research encounters has inspired a few ideas for continuing and extending this thesis. Further work could be conducted by including families. It could be possible to use the photos (tablographies), within the photo elicitation method, to discuss with the women and their families their feelings, memories and sensations of home.

The future work of this thesis could develop by employing foodways as a sensual and embodied method in migration and geographic studies. This approach helps in understanding how migrants engage and transform the cities they inhabit and allow access to explore domestic spaces. Participatory photography is another possibility. This method could give interesting perspectives with regards to significant ordinary 'things' or spaces that are embedded in the way the women make place abroad. Another way to access these spaces could be by looking at migrant's material circuits, such as food and foodstuff exchange and to explore these social and community systems of solidarity and ecology of home. For example, ingredients and stuff that women pass to each other when they either leave the country or move home, are circles of connectivity and reciprocity to explore how individuals make home abroad. These also have an impact on the way we could make our cities more inclusive, diverse and sustainable places. The method used in this research could be employed in home studies (Blunt and Dowling, 2006) to access the domestic places, which until now have remained difficult to contact (e.g. the home). Methodology could be extended by including men, to explore whether they engage with domestic food practices to build home during migration and make a difference to domestic places. Additionally, the method is suitable for regeneration programs (Massey, 1994; Fisher, 2017a), development studies and poverty reduction (Birchall, 2003) to explore how embodying food practices can connect people and how these micro-economies can improve the quality of their lives.

As this work is derived from participative knowledge, I can envisage the perspective of using these findings to inform and drive community action research. Particularly, work on community and well-being linked to foodways, to explore new forms of engagement between different ethnic groups. Studies of food acculturation are becoming more important in an increasingly diversified society to enhance the opportunities for social connection and dialogue through food (Longhurst et al., 2010; Fisher et al., 2017). As the voices of (migrant) women (i.e. as well as minorities and disadvantaged populations) are often of least importance in political agendas, the outcome of this research will be shared with the community through an exhibition that will include different forms of representation used by the women (i.e. photography, videos, recipes, poetry and art/photography), to raise public awareness and produce an archival memory for the

Asian women living in the UK. This study poses new questions for future researchers with regards to the link between gender migration, place, and foodways, and the application of creative, sensorial and participatory food methodologies in order to shed light on the realities of migrants living in multi-cultural cities.

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APPENDIX I

Interview Schedule

[Interviewer]

Before we start, please, tell me if you have any questions, regarding the interview or the use of the data. Remember, you are free to withdraw your consent, up to the point at which I have analysed the data, or refuse to respond to any questions you do not feel comfortable with. If you wish to have this interview, I can give you a copy of the recording, or I can share the results over all the interviews, once I have finished. You could also make the choice of adding information, if you wish. Besides that, I hope you enjoy this conversation, your experience is something very valuable to me, and I must thank you for your help and time.

As you know, I am looking at the experiences of relocation of migrant women through the means of food. I will ask you some questions regarding your daily routine. Please, feel free to talk about anything you feel is important for you in your experience of food. Take your time if you need to think more.

To start with, I would like you to express your ideas regarding food.

Introduction

1. Could you tell me the important aspects that food has for you?

You mentioned some inspiring ideas. We are now going to discuss them throughout our conversation.

Section I

1. Cooking at home

I am going to ask you about how the cooking is organised at home and how was it different before relocating abroad.

1.1 Who does the cooking in your home?

Cues: prepare a shopping list, shopping, choice over the menu, washing up..

1.2 Do you have any special occasions in which this routine would change?

Cues: special days throughout the week or month, key moments in daily routine, special festivals and/or events for the family

1.3 Was this the same when you lived in your home country?

[These questions explore household work in daily life and the division of roles at home and how migration may have impacted over it]

Section II

2. Cooking Skills and intergenerational relationships

2.1 Tell me, can you cook? When and how did you learn cooking?

2.2 Do you have any special meal/s that you like cooking and/or eating?

cues: in what ways are they special

2.3 When would you cook/eat it?

2.4 Where did you take the recipe/s from?

2.5 Which recipes do you use more often? How did you learn about them?

[These questions explore the link with family, community and country through food; if/how traditional cooking and family habits are preserved through generations and despite the relocation]

Section III

3. Decision making over food

I am now interested in knowing how the decision making over food and cooking is made in your home.

3.1 How does the choice of what to eat/cook in your house is made?

Cues: individual, family, kids; on what considerations the choice is based (preferences, nutritional guidelines, budget and affordability)

[The question explores how relocation may impact over the preservation of cultural traditions]

3.2 In which ways (if any) has the way your household is organized changed over the time, or has it been always the same?

[The question explores if/how migration influenced the ordinary habits]

Section IV

4. Experience of relocation through food

Now, I would be interested in talking specifically in what your experience of food was like when you moved abroad.

After your arrival in this country...

4.1 How did you get to know where to find your traditional food when you arrived here?

[The question explores how migration impacted over the single/family and the networks that are linked to the single/family; difficulties; relevant places for the community]

4.2 How did you get to know about the local food when you arrived here?

[The question explores acculturation]

4.3 In what ways did your diet or cooking patterns changed here?

4.4 Have these things changed over time, the longer you have been here? In what ways and why?

Section V

5. Local and foreign food

Now, I would like to know about your interest and experiences regarding different cuisines in this country.

5.1 What is your experience of the local food and culture?

5.2 Any relevant experiences/memories that you you would like to share?

Cues: culture shock; friendships and community network

[This question explores acculturation within the local culture]

5.3 What experience do you have of other foreign foods?

5.4 Can you cook/eat different local and foreing food?

[Question explores acculturation and links with other communities]

Section VI

6. Memories of food

I am interested in knowing if you have any special memories related to the experiences of food in this country.

6.1 Do you have any food which conveys good or bad memories related to your arrival in this country?

cues: or even recently? food and the home country?

6.2 Do you remember any time when you were particularly surprised/shocked about some cultural differences related to the food culture in this country?

6.3 How this place and food changed over the time, along the time you have been here?

6.4 How did you find your country and family has changed in food and traditions along the time you were here? How did you contribute in that?

Section VII

7. Food and Traditions

We are now going to talk about traditions, something that really fascinate me in terms of the differences that exist across cultures.

7.1 Which Festivals do you observe here? What do these festivals entail?

Cues: Moon Festival, Spring Festival or New Year's Eve, Qing Ming Festival, Christmas ...

7.2 Is there any festival or tradition that you cannot, or do not bother, to observe here?

7.3 Is there any food you cannot find here at this special month/time? How do you provide?

7.4 In what ways, if any, do festivals and/or special days like (weddings, birthdays, and funerals) differ here, compared to your original country?

Section VIII

8. Religious practices and food

I will now ask you to talk about food customs in your religion (if any).

8.1 Do you have any diet prescriptions that you must follow during special days along the year?

8.2 How do you find following your diet prescriptions here?

8.3 In what ways it changes when compared to your country?

8.4 Does food is used for other purposes in your culture?

Cues: rituals, food as medicines, food and well-being

Section IX

9. Social practices of food and cultural food exchange

I would like to discuss with you about the social events and occasions in which people meet and share food here.

9.1 On what other occasions do you eat with or share food with others other than traditional and/or religious festivals?

9.2 How do you welcome guests who come from your country, here?

9.3 Would your family have done the same in your original country?

9.4 What would you prepare/present for local or Italian guests, what would you choose as a menu? Could you motivate your choice?

9.5 How would it change (if it does) having the same guests but in your country?

9.6 What would you bring back/send to your family of the local or foreign cuisines here?

9.7 What would/do you bring here from your own country? What foodstuffs you cannot find in this country?

Section X

10. Education, Ethics, Values about food

I think, there is still a lot of ignorance around food, and people need to know more about each other's food and food ways. What do you think?

10.1 How do you think your traditional food/cooking is represented by the locals?

[Stereotypes about food, racism]

10.2 May it be a good idea if locals and members of other communities could learn cooking/eating your traditional food?

10.3 What would this mean for you?

10.4 What would you like them to know about your culture?

10.5 What would you like to learn, if anything, from other communities regarding cooking and food?

[Closure]

- 1. Is there anything more you would like to add or specify, discuss regarding the general areas of food, migration and culture?**
- 2. Would you like to ask me any more information or curiosity?**

[End of the interview]

Thank you very much for your time and contribution, it was really interesting. Is there something I can do to reward you for your help?

APPENDIX II

Sample interview transcript Cod. 7

Date of Interview: 11th December, 2013

Start Time of Interview: 09:10 pm

End Time of Interview: 09:50 pm

Location of Interview: my kitchen in Leeds

[Respondent] I am worried for my English, is not too good

[Interviewer] no no no, it's ok, it's ok. I can understand you perfectly. I put on the volume. Yes. So, the first question is about the meanings of food. So, I ask you how food is important for you,?

[Respondent] What do you mean?

[Interviewer] which kind of meanings food has for you, in your life

[Respondent] ah. Is- ah, before I, I rarely cooked at home, and when I had my baby- before, before my mother cooked for me when I lived with her, when I get married my husband always go to restaurant to have pizza, or pasta so some treatful in my country, and when I had my baby I had my mom doing everything for me. So I think food is not important for us, just the time to stay together and played with my son, but when I moved here I had nothing to do, I had no job, I am not busy, and I start looking at the internet and I found some ((?1.29)) recipe and I started tried to do it and how amazing, my husband loved it, he love it, and then I find important, how important food is so for me now I think food play a very important part in our family life, when I cook, ehm I think I make our life more, ehm amusing, I don't know how to explain it but the environment is warmer, yeah it's warmer, because when I cook my son, mommy can I help you' and my husband love it and when we have new food everybody love it, I feel so happy and I think my husband feel a bit more, yeah I think he feel happy and now we have a real family, not in the past I don't think is a real family because we just come to have dinner or lunch, we just spent thirty minutes to have food and then we go to television, we go to our own room, and then I played with my son. But now we spend more time to, to buy food in supermarket, we can discuss, oh which food you want to eat or in the week end we want to make something special and we can have discussion, and my son 'oh I love it I love it' and when we make it, I think they feel more happy and now I have real family

[Interviewer] the things you said are very interesting, you shed light on different aspects which are very important. You mentioned before about your job. You said that the condition after your relocation improved, food helped to unify the family, bring you all together with the family. But how does it conciliates with your job, because on the other side you had to quit your job, right?

[Respondent] yeah yeah, now I am still thinking about it because now I will come back to my country, and I will get my job back, and I am still wonder, how can I, how can I cope with this. Busy and work and then come home and cook make the ((? 04:23)) think make the thing for our dinner. I am still thinking about it, but I think I will try because if mom or wife don't know how to cook favourite food for husband and son is not good, so I think I will try to manage this, maybe I will cook some ehm difficult, ehm ehm difficult, or the food that take long time to prepare, I will spend week end for that that kind of food. But weekdays I think I will try to cook simple food, but I will cook not with my mummy, no not mummy, I will cook not with my maid.

[Interviewer] your?

[Respondent] I have one person coming to come to help me

[Interviewer] oh a maid?

[Respondent] maid. When I had my baby, my son, in my country made came to help me, so. She do everything. I never cared about food, ok ehm today I want pork, or tomorrow I want beef, that's it, by now I have my idea about food, and how to cook it and prepare

[Interviewer] that's very very interesting, so moving to another country helped you to open to different aspects of food, in a way that you didn't think about food before and now-

[Respondent] never

[Interviewer] it has a strong meaning in your life, it means a lot to you

[Respondent] and my mom thinks surprised me, 'oh you can do it?' I said 'Yes of course!'

[laugh] You can do it? Yes! [laugh] and when I had my second baby I tried to invite here to help me and actually I still want to cook something for her because she spent all her life to cook for me

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] but I have never done anything for her

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] but now I try to cook some delicious food, and some strange food that I learned from this country, ehm like caramel and some cake, yeah

[Interviewer] yeah yeah

[Respondent] actually cake I made, gave to her, she said oh I am so surprised [laugh]

[Interviewer] yeah yeah so, you said you cook food from different countries. Which kind of food do you prefer? Cuisines?

[Respondent] what do you mean for cuisines?

[Interviewer] ethnic cuisines, ethnic food, ethnic means from different countries. Did you tried different

[Respondent] yeah I have been trying Pakistan, Thai, Italian, ehm I think I prefer Italian food. oh and French

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] but I haven't tried in this country

[Interviewer] oh no?

[Respondent] yeah. When I tried I were to France, I have been trying some restaurant and I really loved it, I wanted to find a book tell me how to cook French food, but I haven't find it here. But Italian, I can find lots of cook books

[Interviewer] so did you went to Italy to eat Italian food?

[Respondent] yes of course

[Interviewer] So here in UK you didn't go to restaurant to try this

[Respondent] I have been trying

[Interviewer] oh even French and Italian?

[Respondent] not French, just Italian. Yeah, I can't find French restaurant here. Can you find?

[Interviewer] uhm. No me too, no me too. How is the difference between Italian food in Italy and Italian food here, did you find any difference?

[Respondent] mmh, (2) yeah just one thing. With the pasta I think in Italian is a bit raw, the noodle seems a bit raw, but in this country, it's just right, soft, I think it's just right

[Interviewer] oh right, you mean in Italy (pasta) is a little bit more hard

[Respondent] hard, a little bit, a bit raw, did you find?

[Interviewer] oh ok. Yes yes because we usually we call it, the word is 'al dente', which means that the pasta must not be boiled for a long time, because it becomes soft and melts, but a little bit more hard, so you can feel the texture

[Respondent] yeah yeah yeah yeah! [laugh] and my brother he loved it. When, when we chew it we feel something. But my son now, the babies they didn't like it. In this country I

tried a restaurant in((? 9:35)), and one restaurant in city centre, it's Bistrò, yeah and I loved it

[Interviewer] oh right right. And did you try any English cuisine?

[Respondent] English cuisine? I tried fish and chips. Uhm yeah I think I have been trying English cousin? cuisine

[Interviewer] cuisine

[Respondent] cuisine yeah, ehm I don't remember the name but I don't think they liked it. I went to lake district

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] and I went to local restaurant and we ((? 10:15)) for English cuisine [whispers] I don't like it

[Interviewer] oh what did you have?

[Respondent] ehm some pie with kidney beef inside, some mush potato, and beef, I think casserole beef, and I call lasagne, but I know, I know it's in Italian, I said oh no I don't like it, and my husband said I cook better than them. [laughs] So I don't want to try English cuisine anymore

[Interviewer] yeah [laugh] oh really?

[Respondent] but I still love Bistrò

[Interviewer] so Bistrò is English?

[Respondent] ehm no

[Interviewer] Italian?

[Respondent] yeah Italian

[Interviewer] where is it?

[Respondent] in the city centre

[Interviewer] oh right right is it the one with the flag outside?

[Respondent] I don't remember the flag.

[Interviewer] (19s'). So your cuisine at home would be your Vietnamese or even from other countries cuisines?

[Respondent] yeah. Vietnamese most of the day, and ehm Italian cuisine, at least one time per week

[Interviewer] oh right. What do you cook?

[Respondent] usually ehm on Friday. And my son 'mom' (like to say, can you cook it?) but I have a part time job and I can't cook for him so just on Friday or Saturday. Pasta, I

think three different kinds of pasta, ehm pizza, sometimes pizza, but I don't think ((? 12:23)) that is good ((? 12:23)), lasagne, ehm yeah

[Interviewer] oh that's good. How did you get to know where to shop and find your food here in Leeds when you arrived?

[Respondent] oh my friend. Because my husband came here first after 9 months I came there with him, and my husband know some shop here and we, our friend, and then I can find in the internet

[Interviewer] oh right, really? Oh uhm uhm uhm. So I am interested whether you have some ingredients that you use in your country and you cannot find in this country and has been a little bit hard for you readapt your cuisine, or maybe you can find everything?

[Respondent] no, I can't find anything

[Interviewer] no?

[Respondent] no. Because Vietnamese is small country, you can find lots of things in Chinese store, but it's just for Chinese, some, some of thing we can use the same like, like people in China use, but some herb, special herb, I can't find. Like mint

[Interviewer] mint? But it's quite common

[Respondent] yes but I ((? 14:38)) it-, we call-, is ((? 14:46)) basil

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] I can find basil here, coriander here, but some of our leaf we can't find here

[Interviewer] oh, so has been a little bit hard. How did you do?

[Respondent] yeah. oh, we still think it's fine. We lived here for three years and a half and now we, I gradually forgot the smell of that herb. So we find it's ok, it's ok

[Interviewer] oh right right, that's very sad

[Respondent] yeah it's very sad

[Interviewer] the smell of food is so important, it is part of the memory of your country

[Respondent] so that's why I still want to come back my country

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] yeah [laugh]

[Interviewer] mmh mmh, no I understand that. Let me think about the next question

[Respondent] you know your cake is very delicious

[Interviewer] oh I am very happy you like that [laugh]. Yes you said you cannot find anything, does your mom and dad send packages to you?

[Respondent] no. When they came here to visit us they would bring some. But we just use it for 2 days, one week and then

[Interviewer] yeah one month uhm uhm. And did you go back to Vietnam during these years?

[Respondent] no

[Interviewer] no. And now that you will go back in December

[Respondent] January

[Interviewer] January, so we still have time to meet. Do you think you will bring back something from this country? Any food?

[Respondent] you mean do I bring some English food?

[Interviewer] or whatever you have found in this country

[Respondent] just some, food or tool? I just bring some tool, like, ehm cake tin to bake a cake

[Interviewer] (5') why? Can't you find it in your country?

[Respondent] ehm in our country we make a different cake, not the cake, in my country we have the cake because the French bring it to us

[Interviewer] oh really?

[Respondent] yes that's why I am so happy to cook cake

[Interviewer] oh that's why you love French cuisine?

[Respondent] yeah ehm , maybe maybe. Because the history

[Interviewer] oh, do you think that the French heritage, the French background, this French culture in your country is still alive, present? Or you lost it?

[Respondent] yeah yeah. I think, French affect lots of aspect in our country, for example we have a very famous food, it's called Phò.

[Interviewer] oh?

[Respondent] I think you know it, you know it (she writes it for me it in the paper). You asked me to do it for you

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] Phò? I have never heard about that

[Respondent] oh! Really?

[Interviewer] never, never. You have to teach me

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] what is it?

[Respondent] oh, it's some kind of noodle. And now they have a store in the city centre, and it's very crowd

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] yeah any people all around the world when I talk with them they ask me about Phò

[Interviewer] Phò. I have never heard about that

[Respondent] and now we found it (meaning in Leeds). We have this because the French came to our country and we have some mix between French and Vietnamese and we have Pho.

[Interviewer] oh, ok I'll search it

[Respondent] yeah last week I make it and think about you, and I think oh I have to find you to try, we cook together

[Interviewer] it's noodle, and what's inside

[Respondent] yeah noodle, ehm beef. But I think the important thing is the water for the noodle like some soup. It smells so nice

[Interviewer] yeah. Did the French bring the noodle?

[Respondent] because the noodle we have noodle, and the French bring soup, the water

[Interviewer] (18') yes yes. By the way I am thinking in Leeds, in town, in front of Chinese market there is another market, is that Vietnamese market?

[Respondent] no. We don't have Vietnamese market in Leeds city centre

[Interviewer] oh ok ok. So where do you shop your food?

[Respondent] I try to buy some in Chinese supermarket, and I have to go to, they have some Vietnamese stuff outside city centre, I have to take the bus to go there. The important thing is, the how to say, the shop leader, the shop leader, the owner of supermarket is Chinese

[Interviewer] oh really? The owner of the supermarket of this Vietnamese

[Respondent] yeah, is Chinese, but she lived in Vietnam for 18 years

[Interviewer] oh it's a long time

[Respondent] yeah yeah that's why

[Interviewer] yeah yeah, she can speak Vietnamese, but actually she is Chinese, but she can speak Vietnamese so import some Vietnamese food so I can buy something in this store

[Interviewer] oh, ok ok so. You're not saying that she has food which pretend to be Vietnamese but it is Chinese instead. Do you think it is like that?

[Respondent] no no.

[Interviewer] it's real Vietnamese

[Respondent] yeah yeah. She import from Vietnam. Actually she has both Chinese and Vietnamese food. But in the Chinese supermarket in the city centre I had to buy Thai and Chinese food that pretend to be Vietnamese food

[Interviewer] yes yes. You think they are fake?

[Respondent] uhm uhm. But I have no choice. I have to buy it

[Interviewer] yes of course. And how about the budget for example, do you stay in budget with your shopping?

[Respondent] yeah yeah yeah

[Interviewer] uhm, do you find the food expensive here?

[Respondent] much expensive than my country

[Interviewer] yeah, do you ever gather or share the food with people from other countries? I know you had a party with the English woman downstairs. Was anybody else with you?

[Respondent] no one. Sometimes we have party, my husband have party in his school, and I have been frying our ham to, so he can bring to English but I don't think they liked it (laugh)

[Interviewer] really? Oh no! how do you think about that?

[Respondent] Chinese people like [laugh]

[Interviewer] oh Chinese like. You mean English people don't like it. So how do you think your food is represented by English people?

[Respondent] I think they don't like the smell of it and I think because they get used with their food and now I bring them different kind of food, for example I have some, in this country they have cake made from egg and flour. But in my country cake made from sticky rice and, they don't like it

[Interviewer] right

[Respondent] I think they, they never tried it before, and this is the first time they have tried it, and they don't like it

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] I think, I think, it's just because of their habit

[Interviewer] yes. But you tried their cake instead

[Respondent] I have been trying their cake in my country, you know the French bring the cake

[Interviewer] yeah yeah, you mean you are more used

[Respondent] yeah. But this is first time so they can't love it immediately

[Interviewer] all right, yes of course

[Respondent] and we prepare in different times, we have cake made with sticky rice, bean meat, I don't think they like it. Look at that, look at their cake and pastry! So, it's just because of their habit. The culture, food culture, just food culture

[Interviewer] yes of course

[Respondent] I want to ask when you have a free week end we can have a meal together and [Interviewer] yes!

[Respondent] I will give you some of our food

[Interviewer] I'd love to do that

[Respondent] and I want to hear your feedback because, I just ((? 26:09)) from English and you know they are so polite, 'oh I like it I like it' but, I don't think so, but maybe you will be honest to me

[Interviewer] yeah, yeah I agree, sure. Also your rice cake, I'd like to learn, maybe is more complex than our cake. I don't know if you can teach me some food as well, would be very nice to have a recipe because I think food is also memory, food is memory, food is people, and relationships, so it's very nice to have this kind of contact and, you know, and remember the time you spent in a place, remember the person. I have this kind of feeling that food transmits to me.

[Respondent] yes [laugh]

[Interviewer] so I'd like to. But also because I am curious, you know, trying different cuisines and things like that.

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] so to remain on this topic, what would you like to teach to an English person, or people from other countries about your food culture?

[Respondent] yeah, but no one will to learn it

[Interviewer] why do you say that, why no one? I am asking you to

[Respondent] laugh, just only you, just only you

[Interviewer] Emma, downstairs?

[Respondent] never

[Interviewer] never?

[Respondent] actually we just had two

[Interviewer] parties?

[Respondent] party, just one party and one time she just go out to my house and have tea

[Interviewer] But did she try your food?

[Respondent] no!

[Interviewer] no? oh right. But did you offer to her?

[Respondent] no no no no, I don't try

[Interviewer] why?

[Respondent] see just, she is been moving here from September, and now is December, you know, she is busy studying, and me too (laugh)

[Interviewer] oh it's ok, I thought you did not want to introduce her to your food

[Respondent] no and we now are trying to organize a party where she can bring her food and I can bring my food but ((? 28:20))

[Interviewer] yeah, if you fix it in the evening we are all at home, so maybe one hour? Something like this, sitting down like this, it would be nice you know, and you don't need to prepare an amount of food, just one dish from your country, just little, you say try, because we are not big eaters so you know

[Respondent] ((? 28:43)) Saturday I am busy, Sunday I am busy, uh

[Interviewer] yeah yeah don't worry about that, we have January, when do you go back?

[Respondent] it's 28th of January

[Interviewer] 28th ? So we have one month

[Respondent] remember [laugh] we talked I think one month earlier, but now we haven't. We did anything. We talked about we will share our food one month earlier, but it didn't happen

[Interviewer] yeah but don't worry, it's hard because you work, you have a family two babies so, you have lots of work, you have lots of things to do, me as well with the family, Christmas holiday, you know, but we are neighbours so at some point we will have this occasion because before you live we have to, even celebrate that you are coming back to your country, so we will celebrate this event which is very important for you and I think one hour we can do

[Respondent] remember, yeah, promise me, you will teach me how to make a pizza by scratch (scratch)

[Interviewer] yes of course, yes of course I will, and I'll give you the recipe as well, and also for the bignè, you know, the ones with the cream inside? The ones that you had?

[Respondent] yeah yeah yeah

[Interviewer] I will teach you the cream because it's quite simple in reality

[Respondent] if it's not too late, if it's not too late. I need a pizza first, because ehm next week I will have a party with my friends and they want to make some small pizza, I want to try your recipe

[Interviewer] yeah yeah I will write down how I do. Ehm when do you have this party?

[Respondent] next Thursday

[Interviewer] which number?

[Respondent] I think the 19th

[Interviewer] oh right, is in the 19th ?

[Respondent] . yeah. If you come back, do you come back to your country on 19? Is a Thursday

[Interviewer] (49') yes. And I will take a new one from my mom when I come back, maybe I will bring some ingredients for you. It would be nice.

[Respondent] yeah! Thank you, thank you!

[Interviewer] yes! Maybe some pasta, you enjoy pasta. Yeah let me think about that. Let me check. You can enjoy your cake. How about the festivals that you partake here, do you have any festivals in your country that you celebrate here?

[Respondent] ehm I try to make- ehm you have Christmas in your culture, we have, the holiday, they use to call Chinese, Chinese New Year

[Interviewer] oh do you have it in Vietnam?

[Respondent] yeah and we have some traditional food, and I try to make it here

[Interviewer] all right, can you do?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] oh right, what is the traditional food?

[Respondent] ehm we always have mainly, mainly food on the table, we have a cake, sticky rice, we have bean in a pot made inside and we have to cook for twelve hour

[Interviewer] twelve?

[Respondent] yeah, boil twelve hours

[Interviewer] oh so it's long, so it's impossible for me to do the rice cake

[Respondent] and I don't think you will like it to be honest

[Interviewer] I've tried the mooncake

[Respondent] you tried the mooncake, do you like it?

[Interviewer] ehm different flavors, there was one flavor that I didn't like, there was the Rose flavor that I quite enjoyed, sticky, very sweet and hard, yes but I liked the Rose cake, was ok, was ok, and I brought to my family as well

[Respondent] oh, did they like it?

[Interviewer] yes, yes, my mom, my dad is very traditional with food, but my mom tried, and she said 'oh quite good', we had it

[Respondent] laughs

[Interviewer] so what does it change from your country to here the celebration of festival?

[Respondent] yes, of course because here we don't have family, but in my country we celebrate for four days. The first day we ehm, the whole family gather together, we have meal, and second day we say happy new year with my teacher, ehm my uncle, my cousin, and maybe the third day we go to our friends' house to say happy new year maybe you have cousin with them, and we can go to some park so the children can play because they are off the school and we have four day to celebrate

[Interviewer] are you celebrating Christmas?

[Respondent] in my country?

[Interviewer] ehm both

[Respondent] and here yeah, I try to learn also English do, so I roast turkey

[Interviewer] oh turkey?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] [laugh]

[Respondent] 35.42 this year I think I will roast a goose and now I am trying to find a recipe

[Interviewer] oh my gosh, we don't have this in my country, we don't do that, we do another thing

[Respondent] ((? 35:56))

[Interviewer] yes yes yes, so you try to celebrate Christmas here, in your country you don't have this?

[Respondent] ehm now we have it, we have it, but we still have to go to the office, and the children still have to go to the school, but in the evening we still have a small party, and we pretend to be ehm Santa Claus to come to bring the children presents, and with

[Interviewer] so you have, you know it's similar to here

[Respondent] but you know, we still have to go to the office, is not official

[Interviewer] not official

[Respondent] not official yeah of course

[Interviewer] but you have the French heritage

[Respondent] just on food

[Interviewer] oh just on food, oh ok ok. And what about religion?

[Respondent] ehm I think they try to bring, ehm how to say it. ehm in my country there is Bud- Budd-

[Interviewer] Buddhism?

[Respondent] and here is the Catholic, Christian and some people love it. We have both, but most people in the north follow Buddhism, but in the south they follow Christian or

[Interviewer] and what do you follow?

[Respondent] Buddhist

[Interviewer] oh are you a Buddhist?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] so you are a vegetarian?

[Respondent] no [laugh]

[Interviewer] no? oh, you have to explain me how it works, because I knew Buddhist were vegetarian

[Respondent] yeah if you listen the church, in the Pagoda, you have to be a vegetarian, but I am not a people, I just follow Buddhism I try to do the good things, and I believe in him, I believe in his theory, 38.18 xxx I try not to hurt people, adult, animals but you know I can't stop eating them (laugh)

[Interviewer] so you try not to hurt (animals) but you eat meat, do you eat meat?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] I don't kill them, I just buy in supermarket, last week I buy a crab, live

[Interviewer] alive you mean

[Respondent] yeah, the crab still alive, and I think I still found difficult to boil, and I said sorry to him

[Interviewer] yeah, yeah but we have to eat

[Respondent] yeah, but not my husband, he's not Buddhist, he has not religion. He said me 'ridiculous you say sorry to the crab and after that you eat'

[Interviewer] oh (laughs) it's quite funny yeah

[Respondent] yeah, I feel guilty when I boil

[Interviewer] yeah I think it is quite normal, I had a similar experience in Italy because during Christmas we have the lobster and it's tradition that they bring it alive to the house, because of the freshness but I am still sorry, you know I don't want to see, but I eat, because I love fish

[Respondent] laugh

[Interviewer] what about the freshness in your country and here, do you find it the same?

[Respondent] no, no. oh so so different, in my country, people go to the market every day, every morning to buy fresh food to prepare ((? 40:38)) and buy fresh food, and tomorrow they come back to market to buy fresh food

[Interviewer] we have a market here

[Respondent] but we can't go to the market everyday because we are busy, and it's quite far. In my country, you can find a market, it's not supermarket, an open market, very near your house, wherever you live there will be a market near your house

[Interviewer] oh really? Are there different market all around

[Respondent] yeah! All around, all around. And because open market, you can't find a frozen food in the market, so fish still alive. If they dead, you will buy with a cheaper price but usually they swimming in the water, in the basin. And the chicken still alive. And you say I want this chicken and they will do it for you. They kill the chicken for you. And in the past, when I was small my mother and my father they had to buy large chicken back home and they will kill them

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] and I know how to kill them, I can't believe but I know how to kill the chicken, and how to chop it, how to clean it

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] but here I think most people don't know how do it. Now, everything changed we have supermarket and people don't have to kill the chicken at home but the people in the market will do it for them. Quite a big difference with England, but when you go to Spain and Italy

[Interviewer] oh yeah we have these open markets yeah

[Respondent] I think is a bit familiar

[Interviewer] yes yes

[Respondent] I know it's ridiculous but I still think it's a bit familiar

[Interviewer] yeah yeah of course, because it remembers you the- we care a lot for freshness. But as you said it's not easy for us to go every time to the market every time

[Respondent] yeah because our life has changed

[Interviewer] yeah yeah it's quite different now and there are big chains supermarkets, but still we have in the supermarkets the fresh area, so we still try to keep this important value of freshness

[Respondent] but you know we buy the fresh vegetables, but we have to put in the fridge for one week, and it's not fresh anymore and now just only my mom and the people at their age buy still go to the market to buy food every day, but must of us (in Vietnam), we don't have time. I have to wake up early, send my baby to the nursery and went back to my office, our office start 7: 30 am, you know how, and it's far, and we stop at 5 pm. I have to it normally stop at 5pm but we are so busy, and I usually finish at 6pm, that's why, and I have to have maid in my house, at 6pm I go home and take me one hour at 7:00 pm. I can't do everything, I can't. So I think, now my life have mixed between Vietnamese culture and English culture. Now I think when I come back to my country I need a bigger fridge. Because as I said you I had a maid, and she goes to supermarket everyday and we don't need to [laugh]. But now I need a bigger, I will go to the market on Saturday or Sunday and put lots of things in there and use for the whole week

[Interviewer] it's very interesting how it changed

[Respondent] yeah, yeah extremely. And when I talk to my mom, my mom say it's not good! You need to go to market every day buy a fresh food, I said my mom oh I can't mom, I can't

[Interviewer] yeah yeah it's true. You make me think about things, the experience is very personal. So I didn't think about the big fridge for example. But for me, I have a different experience with the tools. I don't know whether you have a kettle in your country or not, but here they have the kettle and I don't have in my country, so what changed for me is the time spent to do a tea. Here it's just 2 minutes, in my country I have to boil the water (with a pan), and now when I go back to Italy I found it so slow that I had to bring a kettle in my country to make things fast

[Respondent] oh I have the same problem [laugh]

[Interviewer] (laughs) really? What about the oven? Do you have in your country the oven?

[Respondent] no, that's why I can't even bake a cake! No! everything we make by steam or boiling, so different so. But now when I come back I will buy an oven.

[Interviewer] oh you do?

[Respondent] we want kettle. There is some in my country but I think I will buy it here. In my country some people still using it, but I think few a few, not really we boil and with a kettle, it make a loud noise when it boil. Sometimes we put in the warm keeper, how do they call it?

[Interviewer] yeah yeah I know what you mean, you mean like a thermos?

[Respondent] yeah thermos

[Interviewer] to keep very hot, but here you have it automatically

[Respondent] yeah yeah.

[Interviewer] May I ask if you have any bad or good memories of food culture when you arrived in this country? Now you are leaving and you are recollecting all your tools so perhaps, you have remembered some memories of when you arrived here

[Respondent] yeah, I still remember the first time I arrived here. but you are just ((? 35:43)) about the experience about food, not with people, no?

[Interviewer] Both

[Respondent] both? (2) I think first I arrived here just good experience, people so nice with me, I go to the supermarket they smiled me

[Interviewer] and about food?

[Respondent] food (3) I remind, as a first time I don't like food here, when my husband asked me to go to a restaurant I just want to go to Chinese restaurant, Thai restaurant, I don't like the food here, but gradually, I liked it. Because my husband like it and I try to ((? 34:50)) go? ((? 34:50)) with him, and now I like it

[Interviewer] oh right, so you have changed your eating patterns throughout these years

[Respondent] changed yeah yeah

[Interviewer] I just let you finish and I check what can I ask you (11') this we have covered, ehm I think we covered everything

[Respondent] and your boyfriend eat the whole cake?

[Interviewer] yes! he has cake in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening

[Respondent] oh!

[Interviewer] yes! So I kind and bake almost every five days? Or, you know quite often. Oh I am so sick of cakes! [laugh] (8')

[Respondent] laughs. But what happen in China for the cake? They usually have cake after meal?

[Interviewer] no, no, they don't even have something sweet really

[Respondent] yeah. Same in my country, they just have fruit after meal

[Interviewer] but at least you have fruit, they don't even eat fruit (laughs). Yes you use to have more fruit after the meal, while in Western societies, or in my country especially my father will always have a cake after the meal. And he got used to it, because he likes cakes,

and now it's quite a novelty for him. Ehm, how is the way you serve the meal your country? Do you have main courses?

[Respondent] no. first I want to tell you- we would prefer our food bring it together, because I know in your culture, or in England people have starter, course and dessert, in my country we have many many food and we didn't call it starter or main course, ehm we have at least five, ehm- usually when we have a party we have a ten, ten, ten plate and bowl. We have vegetable stuff, vegetable? We have some kind of salad but in our style. We have boiled chicken or beef, and shrimps, or squid

[Interviewer] right , yeah. a lot of things, and ten dishes?

[Respondent] yeah, ten, maybe five or six dishes and four or five bowls. We ((? 53:51))

[Interviewer] what about seven dishes?

[Respondent] yes some people can produces, really from 10 to 7

[Interviewer] no you know what they said

[Respondent] the number? you mean the number? No we don't care about it

[Interviewer] oh right, because Chinese women, they told me, oh seven is very bad, because it's for people who passed the way

[Respondent] oh no sorry

[Interviewer] you don't have this

[Respondent] no, no, no. because 10 is so much that we can't eat everything, so it's a waste of food

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] so my mom maybe in New Year, in Chinese New Year festival, we would prepare ten, but normally when you have a party to gather together we have five, sometimes seven or, maybe you can just have one hot pot [laugh] ((? 54:55)) eating in hot pot

[Interviewer] yeah, yes very interesting

[Respondent] and dessert, I think it's affect by French

[Interviewer] you mean dessert?

[Respondent] yeah, because you see in Chinese they don't use they don't have dessert and we have, and we think it's because of French, it's because of French

[Interviewer] so you have the dessert

[Respondent] yeah, in my country now

[Interviewer] oh. now? Before no?

[Respondent] ehm, we think so, we think so. But have the same culture like Chinese. But I think after the French we had- ehm

[Interviewer] when the French came?

[Respondent] oh! You don't know about this?

[Interviewer] no, no, sorry about that

[Respondent] ehm they came because-I forgot the word

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] they came to-so we had to fight to get independent

[Interviewer] yeah. yeah, against the French

[Respondent] yeah, the French came to our country; oh, my English- and after many years we had to fight, Vietnamese had to fight to the French to get independent and then after that American came

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] and we had to fight with them, again

[Interviewer] oh my gosh, yeah yeah

[Respondent] we had one thousand years to be dominated by Chinese, that's why we have the same culture with Chinese. After Chinese, the French came. After the French we had America. We never had peace, so from 1965 we had independent from the America and we built our country again

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] and we start building our country, and now it is much better

[Interviewer] yeah. What do you have of American food for example in your country? (how cultures resist to others)

[Respondent] in my country coke. coca cola, you know?

[Interviewer] oh, Coca Cola? [laugh]. Yeah. Just that? To eat?

[Respondent] to eat? Yeah. I think Coke

[Interviewer] Coke. Oh ok. It is pretty more about Chinese and French

[Respondent] yeah, I think. We still have been influenced by Chinese and French

[Interviewer] mmh, mmh. Oh, ok ok.

[Respondent] Why I don't remember that word?

[Interviewer] no, it's ok, it's ok. It's so interesting

[Respondent] You know which word?

[Interviewer] no, I don't know what you mean

[Respondent] for example, India is...

[Interviewer] colonized?

[Respondent] yeah, colonized

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] yeah, colonized

[Interviewer] yeah, that's it, yeah

[Respondent] so Vietnam is colonised, is colony of France

[Interviewer] oh, is a colony of France

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] was? A colony of France

[Respondent] yeah, was. Now no

[Interviewer] now no

[Respondent] we are independent

[Interviewer] oh, ok ok. So, yeah, yeah, yeah. So the language is not French, now you are independent

[Respondent] my, my dad can speak French

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] yeah because our country at that time was colony of French, of France. And my dad he was born in 1940

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] he can speak French. But when he grow up, he started now learning English. He went to Italy to study his master

[Interviewer] yes yes, oh that's interesting

[Respondent] I told you before

[Interviewer] yeah, yeah, yeah, he studied what in Italy?

[Respondent] ehm (1) he studied geo- geo- geology

[Interviewer] biology?

[Respondent] no no biology, geology

[Interviewer] oh ok

[Respondent] oh my God, my English, so bad

[Interviewer] no it's ok, it's ok. And shall I ask, about your identity. Do you feel completely Vietnamese or do you feel that you have part of this French culture in your identity? Is this (culture) very separate, it has nothing to do or do you think you have part of this French culture

[Respondent] (3) I think I am Vietnamese

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] (3) because the French, French culture affected Vietnamese culture but we, we adapted and now we think it's Vietnamese so

[Interviewer] so do you feel Chinese?

[Respondent] I think my, our culture, I have 80% the same like Chinese culture

[Interviewer] mmh

[Respondent] and we have 15% of own culture, and 5% comes from French. France.

[Interviewer] oh, so 80 Chinese?

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] 15, yours?

[Respondent] yeah, and 10-

[Interviewer] oh it's very few few

[Respondent] yeah

[Interviewer] but you feel Vietnamese, you don't feel Chinese

[Respondent] no, we still think we are Vietnamese

[Interviewer] even with this 15%?

[Respondent] yeah, yeah we – yeah we-because I said with you, Vietnam was a Chinese colony for 1 thousand years

[Interviewer] yeah, it's a lot

[Respondent] it quite long

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] and now, now I find, we find because we know- ah it's the same like Chinese, it's the same like Chinese, so we know that we have it because of Chinese

[Interviewer] yes, yes

[Respondent] but now we get used to it. One thousand years, so we think it's ours but actually it came from China. Do you understand what I mean?

[Interviewer] oh yes, yes, yes

[Respondent] So we still- one hundred percent we are Vietnamese, but now I know- I knew Vietnamese have 5% culture from French. France. 15% our own, ehm, our ancient, Vietnamese ancient, Vietnamese ancient, and 80% come from China

[Interviewer] that's very interesting, really. I didn't know about that

[Respondent] but never ask Vietnamese, are you Chinese?, they don't like it

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] we don't like it [laugh] oh no I am Vietnamese. But you know, we are 80% same like Chinese.

[Interviewer] ((?1:00:10)) and do you like the Chinese in this country?

[Respondent] yeah (not very sure) I think now is our part, one our - is one part of our life

[Interviewer] mmh mmh mmh

[Respondent] actually, we still think it's Vietnamese we don't think is Chinese

[Interviewer] yes, yes of course (ricorda che ha un fratello che vive in francia, maybe paris)

[Respondent] But actually, it came from China (laugh)

[Interviewer] yeah yeah, of course. And what about your friends in this country, they are Vietnamese as well?

[Respondent] yeah, Vietnamese

[Interviewer] all?

[Respondent] yeah

I: well, Emma English

[Respondent] yeah yeah but, ehm- no, we- all my friends are Vietnamese

[Interviewer] oh right

[Respondent] I am some foreign, foreign friends but

[Interviewer] yeah, yeah

[Respondent] just like you, ehm Emma, a ((?1:00:02))

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] but you know, I grew up with my Vietnamese friend

[Interviewer] of course, yeah

[Respondent] we don't have foreign friend in my country very much

[Interviewer] oh very interesting

[Respondent] I could be I was born in 1980 and at that time in my country just had independent for 5 years and we are so poor, so so poor- the American ban the other countries

[Interviewer] ban?

[Respondent] ban, yeah

[Interviewer] What do you mean, ban?

[Respondent] no other countries can come to my country, trade with our country, or bring food to our country. No! only Russia

[Interviewer] only Russia?

[Respondent] and China

[Interviewer] oh,

[Respondent] oh so we are so so poor

[Interviewer] why? In your opinion?

[Respondent] Because America lose in the war, Vietnamese war, so they decided to have a ban with my country. A punishment with my country. Like the same what happened in Cuba now

[Interviewer] oh, yeah yeah yeah, I know, I know

[Respondent] no other countries can trade with our country. And my husband, my, my father so lucky that he could go to Italy to study

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] yeah. Most of people had to go to Poland or Russia to study

[Interviewer] oh!

[Respondent] and we are so poor you can't imagine it. Until when I was 5 years old, 1995 our home, the dinner meal supper, I and my sister had only one bowl egg and some vegetables, and we had split it in half

[Interviewer] oh!

[Respondent] oh you don't know how ((?1:04:22)) [laugh] I still don't think that we are unhappy, I still feel happy at that time

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] but my father and my mom don't have anything to eat just a rice, mixed with some potato, ehm some potato, and eat with peanut and vegetable, they must grow. And you know my mother is chemist and my father is engineer in geology

[Interviewer] sorry your father is? Say again? engineer in geology

[Respondent] engineer, engineer in geology, yeah. So they are not farmer, farmer much better than us because they can grow vegetables

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] I still remember ehm from 5pm my father and my mom came back from their office in hospital, and they go to garden [laugh] and to try to grow some food, some vegetables for us to eat and we raise some chicken, we can have egg

[Interviewer] oh, you make me so, uhm

[Interviewer] oh, don't think about it, now we are much better. But at that time, oh, when we had egg, oh is happy day, happy day we can have egg, as a day we just have-

[Interviewer] when you had egg?

[Respondent] egg yeah, when we have egg

[Interviewer] and you were happy?

[Interviewer] yeah, we were so happy. I don't eat it, I had rice ehm with the vegetables and some fish ((?1:00:06)) either. Fish ((?1:00:06)), ehm (2) you don't know it, like a bit salt for when you cooking, but you add a water, fish xxx, and we put we put it with the rice and mix it, 1.06 h xxx and then we played with it and then we eat it, oh so delicious. But now you see, everybody can have egg (laugh)

[Interviewer] yeah. So what do you still bring with you of this experience, today that you can eat everything?

[Respondent] everything?

[Interviewer] sorry, I still feel touched. How did this experience affect you, in the way you cook or prepare food for you, for your husband and your children, nowadays in an era where you have everything, in the west as well

[Respondent] I understand what you mean, let me think about it

[Interviewer] yes, of course

[Respondent] (5) uhm Actually at that time we don't have much food to prepare, we don't have it. So, now I just try to teach my son to save the foods don't waste the foods. You know, we had nothing to cook, we had nothing, we had just rice and some, sometimes we had Russian keep us some foods like wheat, the flour and potato

[Interviewer] wheat? wheat?

[Respondent] lots of flour

[Interviewer] flour?

[Respondent] flour

[Interviewer] flour, potato?

[Respondent] yeah yeah. and we, we- oh now I remember [laugh], we have flour but we haven't used this before, because in my country we just grew rice, and French- maybe the French came with flour and then we made cake and we are normal people, so we don't know how to make a cake like French. So my mother had to learn how to make something with the flour because we had nothing to it. Some people mixed it with water and make a dough, and then they make a small dough and boil it and eat it. But my mom tried to mix it with some sugar and some water, and make it like pancake now, and then fry it, but at that time the fat missed ((?1:00:08)), so basically we don't have some fat to fry

[Interviewer] you mean the fat like oil?

[Respondent] yeah, we don't have oil

[Interviewer] oh you don't have the oil, you have butter, like the butter?

[Respondent] yeah yeah, yeah, like goose fat?

[Interviewer] oh, ok ok

[Respondent] but we had pork fat, we don't have goose. So we friend it's delicious so now I still cook it for breakfast sometimes and I still feel is delicious. But my son didn't like it. I think because now he much of delicious things, but from my memory is the best backed/cake I have ever eat, I have eaten, so now I still think is delicious and prepare in the morning

[Interviewer] oh that's so interesting

[Respondent] laughs

[Interviewer] that's so touching, you know

[Respondent] oh

[Interviewer] I really feel touched, and it is so fascinating. I feel sorry for that to be honest, uhm

[Respondent] but don't worry at that time I never think I am unhappy, I never think that, I am hungry every time. oh! you don't know we so hungry, we didn't have nothing to eat, but I never think I am unhappy. We laugh every day, we play and laugh, but at time for dinner, oh! we wanted to go back to the home to have dinner. But now you see the children, mom and dad always have 'to eat eat, come, come to the table we have dinner' but in the past we never had it

[Interviewer] my gosh, yes

[Respondent] we always asked my mom and dad, when can we have dinner, I am hungry. But don't worry, because we don't think we were unhappy

[Interviewer] uhm, ok ok , that's so incredible

[Respondent] but now my mom still talk about that days and she feel, feel ehm pity for us, for the children, because you see my son now have meal to ((?1:00:10)) every day, and he can have everything he want but at that time ehm my mom take us to give us breastfeeding but she had nothing to eat so, after three month she can't produce any milk and she had to boil the rice and take the water from it and put some sugar in and give me because at that time I cried every day, and my mom said oh how, why, and she don't know ((?1:00:14)) she put a little bit of milk I am hungry and after two days ehm they give me the rice water with the sugar and I eat and I sleep for ten hour. And from that time she knew I am hungry

[Interviewer] yes, did your mom told you about this?

[Respondent] yeah. But now I think, we are much better now (laugh)

[Interviewer] yes yes of course, luckily

[Respondent] and if you have chance, come to our country

[Interviewer] oh I'd love to travel, but you see it's very expensive

[Respondent] I know, I know. Maybe in future?

[Interviewer] yeah yeah in future. I am very happy that you came over to Italy to visit

[Respondent] oh that's my dream country

[Interviewer] really?

[Respondent] I still want to come back but, you know it's difficult. I still think maybe in future

[Interviewer] I think we have really been lucky, we also had some bad times in the past, there was some poverty, but at least we had food

[Respondent] yeah, I think nowadays there is still poverty in Africa, and in some minority. In my country still in my country some minority. So I still try to do some charity to them and I think ehm when I come back to my country and I have my job, I will spend more money every month to do a charity because lots of people still they don't have food. In my country still now, when I read about this you can't imagine. The small baby? five years old had to look after one years old because their father and their mother had to go to the forest to find food. But, but our government try to help them. They built ehm nursery, free nursery and baby come there they don't have to go to forest with their mom and dad, and when you look at the 5 years old boy look at the 1 years old girl and they have nothing to eat, because in the nursery ((?1:00:14)) pay the salaries for babysitter

[Interviewer] yeah but they don't provide food

[Respondent] no we don't have money, we can't we can't do it. And the baby sitter try to raise some chicken, to grow some vegetables, and now we have a fund to raise money and buy some milk for them, and you can see how happy they are when they have meat, because before they don't have meat, they just had rice and vegetables and when baby sitter told to their parents, you should bring some meat for them, it's a nutrient ((?1:00:14)), baby can grow up and they bring you know what? A rat

[Interviewer] oh no!

[Respondent] because that what they usually eat at home a roasted rat, and some frog. Boiled frog, and the baby sitter cried a lot but, but the baby eat it [laugh] and feel happy so that's why it touch, and we try to raise some money to them so they can have some meat every day, just a little bit but it's better

[Interviewer] oh my goodness when I think to these things, really I feel like

[Respondent] yeah, nowadays, oh!

[Interviewer] can't believe it, nowadays?

[Respondent] yes, nowadays. And I don't blame my government because they try their best. You know we have a ((?1:00:16)) budget we can't do everything. Now the children don't have to go to the forest with their mom and their dad, I think this is a very good thing. But a small baby who look after another small baby, and they try to, and a 5 years boy try to feed 1 years girl and say look we have meat today, look we have meat today! Oh, it's so touching

[Interviewer] they cannot have childhood

[Respondent] yeah yeah, but now at least they can go to nursery and can play there, they have toys they can play they can learn something, but before they had never, they had to go to the forest and help their mom and dad to find their food. But just minority, in the city we find, but I think most people in the city don't think about them, ((?1:00:17)) more charity work

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] oh no come back to our

[Interviewer] oh no, we have finished our interview. Was so interesting really.

[Respondent] now you can see in Africa, a lot of poverty, everywhere, everywhere, you must think we are so lucky, and you know that why most of people come from China or come from Vietnam or Thailand and want to stay here because here they have better lives, you see, they have better lives, they can go to hospital, ((?1:00:18)) money, good environment, good political system

[Interviewer] oh so how do you think English people represent Vietnamese?

[Respondent] no. Some of them they just know about Vietnam because of the war between Vietnam and America, and some of them still think we are not independent, there is who think we are like the Korean, the north and the south, do you know?

[Interviewer] yes yes

[Respondent] and when, I still remember when I am pregnant and go to see midwife, and said where you come from, I said Vietnam, you most come from south Vietnam

[Interviewer] oh, because is there a big division between the south and the north?

[Respondent] no before, but now we we, it's not civil war anymore

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] so I think, ((?1:00:19)) oh you most from the south of Vietnam, no I said I come from the north and we are independent now

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] and I think she is a bit shy

[Interviewer] yeah

[Respondent] most people here think we still have civil war between the north and the south, they don't know about Vietnam

[Interviewer] well, I don't know either about Vietnam you taught me tonight, you see from food how many things we can learn. I have learned so many things from you. Really thank you so much

[Respondent] laugh. Oh one thing I want to tell you, because last time you said with me your boyfriend don't want to eat the pasta the next day ((?1:00:20)). You see our culture we have many plate and bowl so I think he is used to have many kind of food, no one meal, so now ((?1:00:20)), only one pasta, they eat it, will not like it, because the culture you see. It happened, it is the same in my country now, so when I prepare something I will prepare huge of food and I give my son and my husband one day and I have to keep in the fridge, I prepare other for the next meal, but after that, I take it back. You understand what I mean?

[Interviewer] oh right, yes yes

[Respondent] I think just because our culture, my husband still think about ((?1:00:21)) seven food, but because our culture, we cannot eat the same food every day every day, so I had to change it frequently, maybe ((?1:00:21)) soup, and lunch another food but this soup today we eating it again, but not the same (day)

[Interviewer] ok, so (1m .10 s') thank you so much

[Respondent] welcome

[Interviewer] I hope I can give you something in return for what you did. Oh you don't have to do it. When I will be back from Italy I will bring some pasta

// Interruption. We organize a 'party'. I open again the recording

[Respondent] I don't think mix main course is good for our taste. Do you understand? In buffet I don't think is good way to taste, to find the real taste of food

[Interviewer] oh ok, yes

[Respondent] because we have so many many food and I don't think we can have our taste perfectly. But when you have only one meal and you eat it slowly and you can find the

smell of it and the spices that we put in there, and I think is better to try a little bit, if you just eat a little bit and you try other, I think, we are not specialists in food you know

[Interviewer] yes

[Respondent] so you can't find the difference in food

[Interviewer] oh, so fascinating. I understand what you mean (9')

[Respondent] my stomach just want one food and I want to fill it slowly

[Interviewer] it's interesting what you are saying because in your culture you actually have different flavors and you mix up all the flavors so

[Respondent] but, but, our food come from our country, and we have to think about it. For example, ehm we have different kind of salad, ehm and with this salad we will cook that meat, that meal that meat, other ((?2:21)) not ((?2:21)) with this salad, for example we have a boiled chicken, now I will prepare a boil (chicken) for you, not a chicken soup with them, that soup for example ehm- so all the flavor can combine together, that's why, I can prepare 2 meal for you, but, but mixing 3.09 xx our food with your food I don't think it's a good idea

[Interviewer] right

[Respondent] I think I will prepare two, ehm our spring rolls with Phò, I will prepare our salad with cracker and Phò. Not only one meal, just one culture, your culture one day, our culture one day

[Interviewer] ok

APPENDIX III



Study information sheet

This study explores cultural and religious practices of women's relationships with food. Particularly, it looks at any practice of feasting (Moon Festival, New Year, Christmas etc..) and how these are performed and experienced by women coming to live in a Western country. It will also investigate other areas of interest including shopping and cooking and any other context where food plays a defining role.

The study will be conducted by using interviews obtained by talking with individuals alone or in groups who have given their consent to be recorded. The interviews will take about 1 hour, according to the availability of the participants, and will be conducted in a place mutually agreed upon. The recorded information will only be used for the research, in accordance to the ethical and sensitive nature of the research but also the Data Protection Act, to maintain anonymity. If you wish, you can also use a pseudonym. The recordings will not be heard by anyone other than myself. The information will be used for the research and may be published under anonymity in journals, books or presented in seminars. Please, note that you are free to withdraw your consent to use the information you have provided during the interview. The researcher, will provide for you a copy of the interview so that you can freely decide which information will be available to be use and which not. As a participant you have the right to request more information about the project at any moment. By taking part in this study your contribution will help to further develop understanding of what it means to be a woman migrated in a Western society. You may also develop new networks by creating an interesting exchange of cultural and religious experiences.

Thank you very much for giving your valuable time to this research.

Consent Form

By taking part in this research I certify that:

1. I have been informed about the general purpose, nature and scope of this project
2. I am aware that my contributions will be anonymous
3. I have read the study information sheet and I agree to participate in the interview under the conditions outlined there
4. I also agree that my interview can be audio-recorded
5. I am aware that the information I provide will be used for the research study
6. I understand that any information obtained during the interview will ensure my anonymity at all times. Therefore my name or identity will not be used in any subsequent reports, or in any further research which arises out of this research
7. I understand that if I am uncomfortable with some of the content of the interview being included in the study I can contact the researcher within 2 weeks of the interview to ask for this to be excluded from the transcription
8. I understand that I will also be given the opportunity to read a transcript of my interview and if there is any material I wish to excluded from the analysis I can ask the researcher to omit this from the study material within 2 weeks I have received a copy of the transcription
9. I acknowledge that I am free to withdraw my consent to use the information I provide, in which case it will be removed from the research
10. I also understand that the anonymous accounts I provide may appear in academic publications (articles, books) or workshop presentations by the researcher for this study.

Participant's Signature*

Date

Signature of the person obtaining consent

**Participants wishing to preserve some degree of anonymity may use their initials (from the British Psychological Society Guidelines for Minimal standards of Ethical Approval in Psychological Research)*

APPENDIX IV
Ethnographic photos of my journey to China



Fig. A.1 Making a coffee in China. The kitchen hob in Baoshan District, Shanghai.



Fig. A.2 Eating at Walmart, Baoshan District , Shanghai.



Fig. A.3 The smell of Chinese cooking at noon. Open kitchens. View from my flat in Baoshan District.



Fig. A.4 Belonging in China. Views from the Italian office.



Fig. A.5 'Wǒ yào zhègè' (I want this). Assertive tastes. Dousha baoza filled with sweet red bean sauce bought whilst speaking Chinese in Shanghai.



Fig. A.6 A fish shop in Xinchang Town, Shanghai.



Fig. A.7 Going to the city.
The journey on the train from the countryside to Shanghai.



Fig. A.8 Picturesque palates. Eating in a restaurant in China.



Fig. 12.9 and Fig. 12.10 Livingness of a fish market in Xinchang Town. Buying fish at the local market.



Fig. A.11 Hallways in Xinchang Town, Shanghai.



Fig. A.12 Búyào. Don't . Bàba impracticable kitchen.



Fig. A.13 Western supermarket in Shanghai.



Fig. A.14 Festive family gathering.



Fig. A.15 'Live menu'. Ordering a fish in a restaurant in Shanghai.



Fig. A.16 A menu in a restaurant in Shanghai.



Fig. A.17 At jiuma's (aunt). Saturdays' hot pot.